

EXCHANGE

20 1916

E

85

6

L4

Publications of the University of Virginia

Phelps-Stokes Fellowship Papers

UC-NRLF

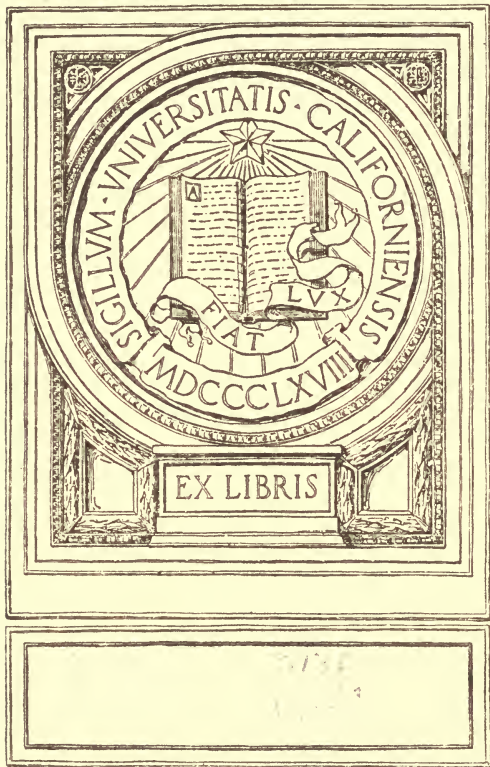


\$B 69 366

LECTURES AND ADDRESSES  
ON THE  
NEGRO IN THE SOUTH

OR  
37316

EXCHANGE









*Publications of the University of Virginia*  
*Phelps-Stokes Fellowship Papers*

LECTURES AND ADDRESSES  
ON THE  
NEGRO IN THE SOUTH

E 125  
6  
LA

---

The Michie Company, Printers  
Charlottesville, Virginia

---

The Phelps-Stokes Fellowship for the Study of the Negro was founded at the University of Virginia in 1912 through a gift from the Trustees of the Phelps-Stokes Fund. It is the duty of the holder of the Fellowship to stimulate and conduct investigation and to encourage and guide a wider general interest among students concerning the character, condition and possibilities of the Negroes in the Southern States.

With this object in view the successive incumbents have organized classes for study that have been well attended and diligent. Special investigations have been carried on by each Fellow; related topics have been assigned for study by individuals and groups, and the results presented for class discussion; and from time to time men distinguished as thoughtful students of Negro Life have been invited to lecture at the University.

This little volume contains lectures delivered by invitation of the Fellow during the past three sessions. The opinions expressed and the policies suggested are those of the respective lecturers. They are published, not to present the opinions of the Fellow nor the attitude of the University, but to preserve conclusions reached by independent observers in different parts of the South.

*University, Virginia,*  
*October 3, 1915.*

## CONTENTS.

---

1. Responsibility of the Southern White Man to the Negro.. 5  
By Alfred Holt Stone.
2. Considerations on Race Adjustments in the South..... 19  
By James H. Dillard.
3. Black-Belt Labor, Slave and Free..... 29  
By Ulrich B. Phillips.
4. What Is Justice between White Man and Black in the  
Rural South..... 37  
By Clarence Poe.
5. The New Reconstruction..... 56  
By William O. Scroggs.
6. Some Public Health Aspects of Race Relationships in the  
South..... 70  
By James Bardin.
7. Thinking White about the Negro in the South..... 84  
By John E. White.
8. Negro Criminality..... 98  
By D. Hiden Ramsey.

# The Responsibility of the Southern White Man to the Negro.\*

---

BY ALFRED HOLT STONE.

---

In the world old history of the tragedy of races there is no more interesting chapter than that which tells the story of the negro in America. Its interest is not alone because it deals with the ever fascinating subject of the development of a primitive people, taken from a state of lowest barbarism and suddenly transplanted to an environment possibly some thousands of years normally in advance of their own. The interest is intensified by reason of the unique fact that here is the one instance in history of a large body of people being deliberately hunted down in their native habitat: transported thousands of miles, in a manner which no government would now tolerate in the case of cattle intended for human consumption; bartered and handled in the open market much as any other species of livestock; made to play one of the most important roles ever played by any manual laboring class in the development of an economic product of world-wide significance and use; becoming the passive, dully submissive cause of the greatest conflict in our history; ushered into citizenship as the ignorant dupes and tools of white politicians, and used as dummies in a travesty which forms the most forbidding chapter in American history; increasing more than one hundred per cent. in number during fifty years of freedom, where gradual but cer-

---

\*The following paper is allowed to stand just as it was presented. It is a frankly informal discussion, by a Southern man before a Southern audience, of a question peculiarly Southern in nature. It was not prepared with a view to publication, and it might be better taste to omit one or two personal passages, or at least to recast the form of expression. But on second thought I have decided to let it go to press as it is, rather than run the risk of unconsciously altering it into something other than it was really meant to be, in the process of rewriting it for publication.

A. H. S.

tain extinction had been predicted by their former masters; standing today a politically and socially isolated body of ten millions of people, owning some hundreds of millions of dollars of property, occupying an economic position of the utmost importance, challenging the serious thought and consideration of the nation of which they form an inseparable part, as a problem which baffles solution.

We are confronted today by the stubborn fact of some ten millions of negroes, who are increasing rather than dying out; who are an important factor in the economic life of America, and particularly of the South; who thus far have not proved assimilable, either politically or socially—and who, therefore, constitute a “problem.” As Southern men, we may well take counsel of ourselves, as to our attitude and responsibilities toward these people and toward the problems created by their presence.

Toward a great many human questions I may say that I am fatalistic, rather than sentimental, in my attitude. It is rather the practical aspects of history which appeal to me. I see no divine plan in the bringing of the negro race to America. I have the utmost respect for those who hold to such a belief. But I cannot share it. I think the case was simply one of a strong people enslaving a weaker, for purely selfish but wholly normal economic purposes. This view serves only to increase the burden of responsibility resting upon the shoulders and the conscience of the white man. I have heard it argued that this contention of present white responsibility based upon the fact of slavery is unsound; that the “damages are too remote.” A knowledge of the history of the origin of negro slavery in America suggests that nothing is clearer or more direct than this responsibility. It is a responsibility which embraces every one of the great maritime powers of Europe in the fifteenth, sixteenth and seventeenth centuries; England, Spain, France, Portugal and Holland. And most surely it rests also upon America, and bears most heavily upon those of us who are closest to the burden. What are the salient facts of the case?

The European slave trade had its beginnings half a century before the discovery of the continent which was to become the home of the most important branch of the negro race. It was

during the reign of Prince Henry of Portugal, whose services to the cause of oversea exploration gained for him the surname "the Navigator," that Antonio Goncalvez brought back three Moors from one of his cruises to the African coast. These Moors proposed to ransom themselves with negro slaves, if returned by their captors to their native country. The ground upon which Prince Henry accepted their proposition is curiously suggestive of the antiquity of one of the prime arguments by which the so-called Christian white man has often sought to justify the enslaving of the so-called pagan negro. It was that this transaction would result in the gaining of souls, "because the negroes might be converted to the faith, which could not be managed with the Moors."<sup>1</sup> Goncalvez obtained ten negroes for his Moors, and they landed on the shores of Portugal in 1442, just fifty years before the voyage of Columbus. That this was more than a mere curious incident without bearing on the real slave trade between Africa and the new world, is shown by the fact that in 1444 the Company of Lagos was chartered, and that of Arguin in 1448, each of which included in its activities the trade in African negroes. These companies are said to have brought into Portugal and Spain seven or eight hundred negroes a year between 1444 and 1460.<sup>2</sup>

In the description of the landing of the first two hundred and odd negroes brought to Portugal, in 1444, quoted by Helps from the Chronicle of Azurara, we may read the first count in the indictment against modern slavery, destined to be repeated ten thousand times in the English speaking world during the 417 years which elapsed between that time and the destruction of slavery in the Southern states. "But now for the increase of their grief," so runs the chronicle, "came those who had the charge of the distribution, and they began to put them apart one from the other, in order to equalize the portions; wherefore it was necessary to part children and parents, husbands and wives, and brethren from each other. Neither in the partition of friends and relations was any law kept, only each fell where the lot took

---

1. Oppenheim's *Helps Spanish Conquest in America*, 1, 20.

2. *Ibid.*, I., 5 n.

him." We are further informed that the Infante was present to look after the fifth which fell to his share," considering with great delight the salvation of those souls which before were lost." <sup>3</sup>

As suggesting the very early part which negroes took in the economic life of the new world, we may recall that the transfer of negro slavery from Europe to America took place in 1501, only nine years after the first voyage of Columbus. For fifty-seven years negro slaves had been familiar objects in some of the cities of Portugal and Spain. It is not surprising, then, to know that the first negroes brought to America were not savages from the wilds of Africa, but were civilized, native born inhabitants of Europe.<sup>4</sup> For quite a while, in fact, none but so-called Christian negroes were permitted to be imported. It was not until 1517 or 1518 that a direct trade was established between Africa and what is now the island of Santo Domingo. This was under a monopoly contract granted by Charles Fifth to Governor de Bresa, at the recommendation of Las Casas, which provided for four thousand negroes at eight years.<sup>5</sup>

The mention of the good Las Casas suggests the curious admixture of benevolence and selfishness which was urged in connection with the definite establishing of the direct African traffic. There is no questioning the good priest's sincere desire to save the Indians from the killing labor of the mines, which was rapidly destroying them, by substituting a stronger class of laborers. There is, however, no questioning the fact that the conviction of those on the ground, that one negro was equal to five Indians for labor, rather than any sentimental regard for the native, was at the bottom of the first large importations of negroes,—which really marked the beginning of slavery as an American economic institution.

Negro importations to the Spanish American mainland began about 1523 to 1525; and assumed important proportions under licenses granted by Philip the Second, in 1551 and 1552, for the transporting of some 40,000 slaves. Spanish and French companies carried on the business, in a more or less sporadic fashion,

---

3. *Ibid.*, I., 24-25.

4. *Ibid.*, I., 5.

5. *Ibid.*, II., 13; III., 148.



for the next century and a half ; or, say, down to the first assiento to England in 1713. English seamen occasionally engaged in the slave trade probably as early as 1553. Sir John Hawkins is probably the most familiar of all the names identified with the traffic. But it was not until about 1623-25 that the trade began to be regularly and systematically carried on in British vessels. From that period down to 1807, when the lawful business came to an end, the English became the greatest slave carriers of the world. They supplied not only their own possessions in the West Indies and on the Continent, but after the assiento of 1713 they furnished slaves to Spanish America as well.<sup>6</sup> The many so-called estimates of the number of negroes brought to America are but little better than guesses. From the very nature of the business, the most that can be said is that such figures are merely suggestive approximations. The number brought to Spanish America may be said to have been somewhere between four and seven millions. The guess for English America, insular and continental, is about three million during the century preceding the Revolution. The number brought into the thirteen colonies may have been about three hundred thousand.<sup>7</sup>

In so far as abating responsibility is concerned, there is but little force in the statement, so often repeated by Southern writers as a plea in justification or defense, that New England imported slaves, used them until she found it no longer profitable, then sold them to the South. There is usually the accompanying declaration that the South herself had little, if any part in the oversea trade. It took two to make a bargain, and for every slave sold by a New England trader to the South, there must of necessity have been a Southern purchaser. If the South was not extensively engaged in the African trade, it cannot be denied that she did a brisk business in the interstate traffic,—and this too for half a century after the other business was outlawed and branded as piracy on the high seas by the entire civilized world.

Lest I may be misunderstood as stressing too heavily the primary responsibility of the Southern people, permit me to express

---

6. Gomer Williams, *Liverpool Privateers*, 466.

7. Rhodes, *Hist. of U. S. I.*, 11.

a most emphatic disclaimer,—in so far as the idea of such responsibility being peculiarly Southern is concerned. A very large section of the white race is tarred with the same brush. If the English taunt the Spanish, as has been done, with the saying that the Alcazar at Madrid was built with the profits of slave-trading concessions, the Spanish may say as much of the fortunes of more than one great Manchester house whose early business was that of manufacturing goods for the African trade. It was an English actor who once cried out to a Liverpool audience that the very stones in Liverpool's houses were cemented with negro blood.

To revert to my practical view of such things—Slavery was in truth simply one of the great commercial tools of the world, which could not have developed if the world had not demanded its services. Its rise, progress and decline were merely part of the history of its times. Of the moral aspects of the English part of the business, we may say with Baines: "So totally different was the feeling which then prevailed on this subject, that whilst the article of the treaty of Vienna, denouncing the African slave trade, was regarded as the noblest article of the great pacification of 1815, the article of the treaty of Utrecht, giving England the privilege of importing negroes into the Spanish possessions in America as well as into her own, was regarded as one of the greatest triumphs of the pacification of 1713."<sup>8</sup> Of the economic aspect of the American branch of the institution, we may safely accept the opinion of Doyle: "There is no feature of colonial history with which moral and sentimental considerations have so combined themselves as the question of slavery. Yet there is hardly any which has been so largely determined by physical causes, so little by the deliberate volition of men."<sup>9</sup>

But from the very inherent nature of the present situation, the South cannot escape a heavier measure of responsibility for and to the negro within her borders, than accrues to the rest of this country or to the rest of the world. We have cried "hands off" for so long, have demanded so insistently that we be let alone,

---

8. Williams, *Liverpool Privateers*, 470.

9. Doyle, *Eng. Colsin Am.*, 243.

have so often assured the world that we could handle the situation, if only free of outside interference, that, now that we have been let alone, we cannot shirk the responsibility which comes with the freedom we have asked. The white people of the Southern states have control, absolute and undisputed, of the political, social and economic affairs of those states and of every county in them. They frame every law enacted in the South, down to the ordinances of every village council, saving only a few negro towns of unimportant significance. Every sheriff, every mayor and police officer, every judge, is a white man. Throughout the length and breadth of the land there is not one organization, political, religious, industrial or social, which is threatening, or even seriously questioning this control. Living under the laws which we frame, interpret and execute, subject to the action of our officials, amenable to the processes of our courts, a non-detachable part of our industrial economy, sharers of our economic destiny, are some ten millions of people of another race. Under this bald statement of fact it would be as idle to deny a large measure of responsibility for the part which these people are to play in their own future and in ours, as it would be criminally unwise for us to fail to use every effort to make that part what it should be.

It is for us to say whether we shall drop the burden, let the negro drift with his own current, increase in criminality, grow in idleness, and finally develop into an incubus too heavy to carry. To accept such a laissez faire program would be tantamount to a confession of stupidity and weakness such as the white race has not yet made. Definitely to turn away from it, involves at least the assumption of an attitude contrary to all that the other course implies,—if not the formulating and following of a specific contrary plan of action. I do not come to you this evening with any such formulated plan. I am only venturing to suggest the necessity and wisdom of considering the subject in all its aspects and ramifications, with a view to some future course of action. And unless we have in view as our ultimate objective the ameliorating of the general conditions of race relationship, the making possible of some slight improvement of the future over the present, to be worked out through

the slow and tedious processes of years,—why study the question at all? If our study leads to nothing tangible, if we are to continue to grope aimlessly in the fog of the fancied knowledge which we think is ours by inherited contact, then we might as well leave the subject to politicians and frankly wash our hands of it. But can we thus easily avoid our responsibility?

No man is more keenly alive to the difficulties involved in doing anything definite for the negro masses than I. I know his faults, his vices, his weaknesses, the inherited and apparently ineradicable limitation of his character. I appreciate also the difficulties grounded in certain restrictions placed by the federal constitution upon the action of the States,—restrictions which make it impossible frankly to treat the negro as a negro. That is as a human being entitled to every essential right of life, liberty and property, yet at the same time as a race the mass of which is at least for the present normally on a different level of intelligence and responsibility from that of the average white man in the same environment. At the same time I find no valid excuse for inaction in the argument of inconvenience.

First of all, our investigations should lay the stable foundations of such constructive effort as may subsequently prove needful and practicable. The very groundwork of this foundation is a better knowledge of the subject on the part of our own people. If I were asked by you what in my opinion is the one most important thing to be undertaken by Southern people in their handling of the whole subject of the negro and his problems, I think I should answer that our primary need was a more thorough knowledge of the Southern negro by the Southern white man. I mean real, scientific knowledge,—not the superficial information acquired by contact with individual negroes. If there is any one branch of human knowledge of which the average Southern man claims peculiar and almost exclusive possession, it is that pertaining to the negro. We regard this as one of the birthrights of the Southern child,—something born with us and in us,—and hence something for which there is no necessity of study. It is often the case that the average individual is least thoroughly informed upon the details of everyday matters which surround him. And this is no exception. The world of scholarship, the

standards of modern research, and the importance of the subject alike demand something more at the hands of Southern people than sentimental twaddle about black mammies and faithful body servants, on the one hand, and generalizing dissertations upon negro inefficiency and criminality, on the other.

What are the facts? Is the Southern negro losing ground economically, or is he slowly but steadily increasing his holdings of real and personal property? Is he doomed to extinction through disregard of moral and hygienic laws, or is he painfully learning the lesson which every race must learn that is destined to survive in the ancient and perpetual struggle of mankind? Is he a hopeless menace to Southern social life, or is he a creature into whom may be instilled lessons of law and order, with reasonable promise of a fruition of better living and greater observance of the usages of civilization? Is he a lustful beast that should not be allowed to roam at will upon the earth, or is he a fairly moral human being, furnishing no more than his proportion of lapses into the more revolting social crimes? Is he really a non-taxpaying burden upon Southern white people who have generously contributed to his education, or does he pay his own way with his own taxes and educate his own children at his own expense?

As a Southern man, born and reared and living in the Southernmost part of the South, addressing an audience of Southern students who must inevitably play their part in moulding local and national public sentiment upon a subject of grave public moment, I put these questions to you not in any idle or perfunctory spirit. They are questions demanding your most earnest thought, your candid and serious study, and your honest and unprejudiced reply. I appreciate, probably quite as fully as any of you can, the difficulties involved in the prosecution of investigations such as I suggest. But nothing is easy that is really worth while. Here is a field of study which is at once one of the most important in America and one which is the peculiar province of the Southern man. Yet what Southern authorities have we on any of its branches? The only statistics of lynchings in the United States are those annually compiled by a Chicago newspaper. The only authoritative study of lynching and its ramifications

is by Cutler, of Western Reserve. The only study of negro criminality is by Willcox, of Cornell, and it is now out of date. With a few exceptions the only economic studies of the Southern negro have been by students from outside the South. The best monographic treatment of the negro farmer is by Kelsy, of the University of Pennsylvania. There are scores of topics, subsidiary to the general subject yet capable of throwing a great deal of light upon its most important aspects, which afford inviting avenues of investigation for the student inclined to the general fields of sociology, economics or history. The relation between property holding and crime could be worked out in a study of the negro population of any Southern penitentiary. Yet in the main we are content to consider the negro race as a unit in its contribution to our criminal class, without any fair attempt at discrimination between the different elements of its population. We are complacent in the belief of our generous carrying of the burden of negro education, yet we do not know the facts upon which to base an intelligent estimate of the real weight of this burden. Only a few Southern states provide separate racial assessments which will enable us to determine the taxes paid by each race, and we have made no adequate use of the information made available by even these. We talk of what the Southern people have done for the negro defective and delinquent classes. Yet in some Southern states the provision for such classes is pitifully crude and inadequate. Even the insane among them are in far too many cases confined to the common jails, simply because of the failure of the state to provide sufficient accommodations in asylums. It is foreign to my purpose to indulge in a dissertation on different theories of incidence, but I venture to suggest that in considering the question of public burdens and public benefits we give proper thought to that which holds that the burden of taxation falls most heavily upon the poor,—that the man who pays rent on city buildings or farm lands pays likewise his full share of the taxes upon what he uses and occupies.

We can make but little progress as long as we continue to indulge in sweeping generalizations. There are some ten millions of negroes in the United States, and they are not all alike. There is no such concrete thing as "the Southern negro,"—just as there



is no such definite and delimited individual as "the Southern white man." These negroes present a large variety of differences of complexion, native intelligence, education, inherited and acquired characteristics, temperament and disposition. In short, they differ among themselves in all those respects which differentiate individuals and groups of any and every other race. Just so with their status, and with the relations between themselves and the white race, in different communities and places throughout the South. It is unscientific, incorrect and misleading to speak of race conditions or race relations as though they were something reducible to definite terms of expression, applicable alike to all places where the two races are found in contact. I have heard thoughtful Southern men, who were not politicians and who had no questionable end to serve, declare that in the South no white woman was safe when left alone, and that the life of the women in the rural South was one comparable almost to a state of constant siege. More than once I have protested against any such assertion, descriptive as it is of a condition which would place our country upon the footing of an African jungle, peopled by creatures no better than savage beasts. When a Southern man thus describes his own immediate environment I am not disposed to take issue with him. I grant that his knowledge of his own surroundings is superior to mine. But I must insist that he do not generalize for the South as a whole. I live in the country. In my county there are about nine negroes to one white person. On Dunleith Plantation there are some three hundred and odd negroes, and only five white men. Yet the women of our families are as safe from any form of molestation as they could be anywhere in the world. During the Mississippi river floods which prevented me from keeping my engagement to come here last spring, I had one hundred and seventy-five of these negroes almost in my very yard for a period of seven weeks. The only white persons there were my wife and myself, and on several occasions business demands caused me to leave her entirely alone with them. I did so with no more thought of possible harm befalling her than would have come to me on leaving her under any other circumstances. And indeed she was fully protected. In this presence I wish to bear my testimony to the firm belief that any negro man there would, without thought of

personal consequences, have risked his life in her defense. Pardon this personal digression. I indulge it only to add emphasis to my objection to the misleading and often unjust generalizations which are so frequently made in this connection.

Of some things we may rest assured. The negro is here to stay, and his numbers will increase rather than diminish. In a certain large sense, whatever affects his race also affects yours and mine. From this there is no escape. There is no method of computing the vast accumulation of economic loss entailed upon the South through long generations of dependence upon unskilled, untrained negro labor. In ante-bellum times the observant traveler contrasted conditions which he saw in the South with what he saw in the rest of the country and in Europe. He charged to slavery the unfavorable balance against the South which everywhere met his eye. In truth, it was not slave labor but negro labor which was, at bottom, responsible. The contrast between North and South was not the contrast between free and slave labor, but that between white and negro labor. Whatever makes for greater efficiency on the part of Southern negro labor, whether in agriculture, in the industrial trades, in domestic service, makes for greater wealth and happiness for the South as a whole. Whatever makes for cleanliness, for more decent living, for better housing conditions, for greater freedom from disease among our negroes, makes for health and peace of mind among ourselves. Whatever makes for law and order and right living among our negroes, makes for peace and safety in the community at large.

The South has nothing to fear from the decent, self-respecting, law-abiding negro. In so far as I can see, his presence is no menace to the white community. It is the negro of the dive and the slum, the conveyor of filth and disease, the gambler and the "bad man," the gun-carrying, whiskey-drinking, drug-using "rounder," whose black shadow sometimes disturbs our peace of mind. And there is not a negro dive, a crap joint or a "blind tiger" in any county in the South which does not exist through either the connivance or indifference of the white man.

If it were possible to establish a better basis of mutual understanding between the races, or between leading men of both races, it would be a long step in improving general conditions



and in softening some of the harsher aspects of the problems which confront the respectable negro. It hardly seems possible to accomplish much by mere outside pressure upon the negro. You cannot legislate a people into either morality or prosperity. But a definite attitude on the part of white men who would say to the proper negroes in a given community: "We are your friends. Our only wish is to help you help your people. Our only request of you is that you help us to co-operate with you," an attitude which would be equivalent to such a declaration, would be a power for helpfulness both to black and white.

The exercise of a sense of discrimination between negroes of different classes is a necessary pre-requisite to any effort at negro betterment. I have said that there are just as many different kinds of negroes as there are of white people. It is just as discouraging and disheartening to a respectable, law-abiding negro to feel that the white community regards the entire negro element as one and the same, to feel that he is held responsible for the doings and character of the lowest class, as it would be for a white man similarly situated.

Protection to person and property, by law and public opinion, is another factor of far-reaching influence, if only it could be thoroughly established. There is no doubt in my mind that this is one important element in the situation which makes for racial peace and quiet in the British West Indies. I do not believe that there is any creature so low in the human scale as to be beyond the reach of the influence which a feeling of security, of fairness and justice in the administration of the law, brings with it. The affording of a decent environment to respectable negroes striving to rear respectable families, is another such influence. Beyond question there is also room for reformation in the administration of penal institutions, most of which are little more than graduate schools for hardened criminals. This would mean the establishing of reform schools for juvenile offenders. We might add to the foregoing the white man's support of and interest in every deserving negro school, industrial or otherwise, coupled with a strict supervision of the teaching force in every school maintained by the state, and the broadening of the whole field of the educational training of the negro along well considered lines rather than its restriction along any.

Equalling, if not transcending, any other opportunity in this field of influence and work, is that open to the Christian ministry and the Christian church. The church and its ministers are privileged to say and to do things which would be misunderstood and possibly harmful if attempted by other forces or other men. I am aware of the work already done and doing by the church, but there seems to be a need for somehow correlating the work of the church among negroes more with the common, every day aspects of their lives. One function I have in mind is that of bringing the races closer together; the broadening of the influence of the white race over the other; of making the negro feel that the boasted friendship of the Southern white man is something definite and tangible, and not a mere rhetorical mockery and sham, meant mainly for foreign consumption. Is there a greater missionary field on earth for practical missionary effort than is offered Southern churches by the Southern negro?

Equal, probably, to anything else is the duty and responsibility which devolve on the Southern white man, by reason of his position, his environment, his inheritance and his claim to be the friend and mentor of the negro, to set the latter a proper personal example. The negro is an imitative creature, or we may say that his race is in its imitative stage. It is human nature for the negro to seek justification for his own shortcomings in the conduct of some member of the race which he is taught to regard as his superior example. It is merely a truism to say that every man owes to his community the duty of an example of right living, of a clean and upright life. The truism becomes freighted with deeper significance when applied to the Southern white man whose lot is cast among a mixed population.

The whole matter may be summed up, in my view, as an expression of necessity upon the white man's part for arresting the growing tendency toward cleavage between the best elements of both races, the lessening of contact between the worst, and the restraining, as far as may be, of the forces and influences which make for the negro's physical, mental and moral degeneracy.

This is peculiarly a white man's problem. And it is the Southern white man who, in the last analysis, is most vitally concerned in its solution.

## Considerations on Race Adjustments in the South.

BY JAMES H. DILLARD.

When Mr. Ray Stannard Baker was in the South preparatory to writing his excellent book entitled "Following the Color Line," he asked me if I had any solution for the race question. I was not at the time acquainted with the purpose of Mr. Baker's mission. My first reply was that I knew of no immediate solution of the problem; and then, correcting myself, I confessed that I might make one suggestion, namely, the decapitation of the next person who said anything about it. Mr. Baker did not accept the idea of my suggestion, for which neglect we are profoundly thankful. In my opinion, his book, so full of information and keen insight, is a work for which all fair-minded people, North and South, owe him a debt of gratitude. The book proves furthermore that honest investigation and intelligent discussion may always be helpful. And yet, there was perhaps some excuse for my exaggerated suggestion of silence. There have been times when, there have been phases of this subject about which, such talk and discussion as we had did more harm than good. Moreover it is true that there are sores and bruises which only the procession of days, months, years, can remedy and heal. There are readjustments and new views in social and economic matters which only the revolution of time can bring around.

Consider one very deep and very vital feature of our race question in the South. I am almost persuaded to say that it is the heart of the whole question. I refer to the necessary change of view which we Southerners are called upon to take. I hesitate to make the statement, lest it be misunderstood, and yet the fact must be recognized. We must face the change from thinking of the Negroes as members of a slave race to thinking of them as members of a race, which like other races, may develop into higher civilization. Yet there need be no surprise, no blame, if we of the South are slow in coming to the realization of the

change. Think of the tremendous change from the love for the old black mammy to the plain recognition of the landowning Negro farmer or the town Negro grocer and druggist. Is there any wonder that time is needed to adjust us to such change? The Negro too needs time to adjust himself, as much as we whites need time to adjust our own point of view.

Let me say at once that there is little trouble in actual practice, in the common every-day routine of life and business. Negroes testify to the good-will of the Southern whites in the enterprises which they undertake. The Negro bankers all tell of the assistance or expression of approval which they had had from the local white bankers. All such Negro enterprises go on without opposition and secure the good-will of white people. The necessary coöperation of the races goes on in the main with friendliness, and I see no reason why it should not continue to go on, each race gradually accommodating itself to the changed conditions. But the changed view-point, in regard to the race as a whole, cannot be adjusted over night.

Meanwhile there should be an effort toward having our discussions such as are based on knowledge of facts and a desire for peace and good-will. For this reason we welcome and applaud the donations of the Phelps-Stokes Fund in establishing this course of lectures and a fellowship in this University for the purpose of promoting investigation and discussion as to the conditions of the Negro population and the relation of the two races. Let us also welcome the University Commission on Race Questions formed for the same purpose and composed of representatives from eleven of our Southern State Universities. We shall look forward with deepest interest to the work of these and similar agencies, such as the meetings of the Southern Sociological Congress and the work of college groups of the Young Men's Christian Association. In the present lecture I shall venture to deal with certain general facts and conditions already known perhaps to most of us.

First let me say that it seems to me remarkable that there is not more friction between the races when we consider all that has happened. I wonder daily at the peaceful relations, since it really seems that little has been left undone which might cause

irritation. Yet the fact is that the millions are going on quite peacefully about their business. It is only the dozens and hundreds about whom we hear trouble. And let me say here that it is a pity that the way of newspapers happens to be harmful in this respect. When mainly the evil things are considered news, the result is misleading. I attended a large Negro educational meeting where white superintendents and colored teachers spoke, where there was important and interesting business transacted for the educational advantage of the race. I saw no mention of this meeting in any newspaper, and yet nearly every paper I bought, in crossing three states, had some notice of a shooting-scape between a white man and a Negro which occurred on the same day and in the same town.

I am only wishing to call attention to the obvious fact that in the main the two races are actually living and working peacefully together in all our Southern communities. When three branch libraries were recently built in New Orleans, the lowest bidder for one of them was a Negro, and he was awarded the job without any question. The memorial library at the Louisiana State University was erected by a colored contractor. I might multiply such illustrations in all parts of the South, and I think they tell the important story which ought to be emphasized whenever we think of the race problem, because, as I have said, we are in danger of forgetting the commonplace when we hear of the extraordinary.

To my mind the generally peaceful relations which exist indicate the settling down of the two races to a basis of gradual adjustment, such a status as might have been begun thirty or forty years earlier, but for the mistaken ideals of the statesman and the selfish ideas of the politician. Let us dismiss the politician; but a word should be said about the ideals of the statesman, such for example, as was Charles Sumner. Phillips Brooks once said that we cannot live this life aright without the vision of the eternal life, and that we cannot live for the eternal life without keeping our eyes on this life. The same thought can be applied to our ideals; we cannot live for them in the best way and bring them into effect without keeping in view the plain, homely, actual facts of existence. This is where statesmen like Charles Sumner

missed the best results forty-odd years ago. They tried to legislate in a day their ideals for two peoples, neither of which they understood. They not only did not understand the people for whom they were legislating, but they forgot all about human nature, and inheritance, and environment, and all the other tremendous facts of commonplace life. The politicians of the period had no vision of the future; they wanted immediate results for themselves; they neither thought nor cared about ultimate harm. The Sumners did care, and they meant well, but they unfortunately kept their eyes too steadily away from the stubborn world. So, after the storm and stress, out of which undoubtedly some good came, we had to go back and take a new start. And now let us hope that self-seeking politicians and all who are still lacking in patience may not retard the sure progress, gradual but sure, which is certainly being made in the solid way of race improvement and race adjustment.

In expressing this opinion I do not for a moment imply that conditions are satisfactory. I only mean to say that they are becoming more so, and that they are even more so at the present moment than one might expect.

There seem to me several immediate causes of complaint which should be mentioned. But before mentioning these I wish to say in all fairness that they are not confined exclusively to the South, and I wish to emphasize what seems to me a fact of prime importance, namely, that in opportunities to work the Negro has perhaps a freer field in the South than he has elsewhere. The same Negro who built the University library of which I have spoken was not allowed to work at his trade in Chicago. This statement is from his own lips. It cannot be said too often that the Southern people do not stand in the way of the Negroes' opportunity to work and by work to improve their economic condition. But there are other things in life besides work. Man does not live by work alone and, as I have said, I think there are several immediate causes of complaint which should be considered.

Any one who has had the opportunity of observation knows that Negroes have just ground to complain of their treatment in the lower courts, and these lower courts are naturally the main



courts for them. One of the severest criticisms that can be made against civilization and governments is that less care is taken, less money paid, less thought given to insure justice among the poor than among the well-to-do and rich. Solemnly we talk about the importance of having learned and spotless judges for higher courts, and make much ado about supreme courts and all courts of higher jurisdiction; but for ordinary justices of the peace and for judges in police courts, we may select any broken-down politician or ward-heeler. The South is not unlike the rest of the world in this; but because we are like the rest of the world, the Negroes suffer; and, because of the fact of race prejudice added to the misfortune of poverty, they suffer all the more.

Another just cause of complaint may be found in the treatment which Negroes too often receive from the employees of public service corporations, especially from the employees of common carriers, such as ticket sellers and car conductors. I do not speak of the accommodations, which, though there is improvement, are not what they should be, when we remember that a full fare is paid; but I speak of the humiliating treatment which Negroes too often receive in the way of coarse and gruff words and manner. I need not say that this evil would be disapproved as sincerely by men of gentlemanly instinct in the South, as by men of gentlemanly instinct in the North.

A third just cause of complaint, especially in most of the rural districts, is that the school officials do not apportion a proper amount for Negro public schools from the public funds, and furthermore that insufficient care is taken in the administration of even the amounts appropriated. The Southern states spend a large amount of money on Negro education, much of which is almost wasted, and the fact is that with many notable exceptions many school-boards do not seem to care whether it is wasted or not. The Negro schools in the country have hitherto had little or no supervision. In a large proportion of the rural districts the teachers have been too poorly paid, and the terms have been too short to make the school little more than a farce. But these conditions are beginning to change. We are beginning to see that from every consideration of justice, as well as from every consideration of economics and self-interest, the masses

of the Negroes in the country must be brought out of the condition of ignorant inefficiency. I think furthermore, as I shall say later on, that the disposition to improve the public schools for Negroes will advance with the advancing idea of a revolution in the character of the schools. When it is seen that the schools can be made a part of practical life, that they can teach home industries, and habits of cleanliness and promptness and thrift there will be more disposition to spend money in their behalf. Let me say that there are many hopeful signs of the coming changes.

A fourth just cause of complaint refers to the subtle matter of which I hesitatingly spoke at the beginning. It is our generalization of the Negroes as merely—I hardly know how to express it—merely a mass. We Southerners generally like the individual Negro, will work with him, help him, joke with him. But in another mood we class all of them together as a mass. I have heard a distinguished Southern lawyer speak contemptuously of the idea of having Negro lawyers, and yet, at another time, speak in terms of praise of a particular Negro lawyer with whom he had actually been associated in a criminal case. This is an interesting fact, and there are many similar instances.

A main feature in any discussion of the race problem must be, are the Negroes improving? Is the race advancing in education, in civilization, in enlightenment, in moral and economic standards? I think there may be the same reply to these questions that would be made if the questions were asked concerning other races. The fact is that there has been a notable advance within the Negro race during the past forty years. No one can travel through the South, and fail to see this, unless he keeps his eyes solely on a certain type of still-existing plantation Negro or upon the low type of the city alleys. No one could stand before a meeting of the Negro Business League and fail to see the advancement there represented. There are signs of progress in nearly all parts of the South: increasing ownership of land, the churches and other buildings for Negro activities in the cities, better-looking homes, large amounts contributed by the Negroes themselves for their religious and their educational institutions, growth of the number engaged successfully in business and in the



professions, increasing sanctity of the marriage relation, the growing sentiment of race consciousness and race pride, the higher and more dignified tone of the Negro press. All of these are signs which may be seen, and the facts, so far as they can be enumerated, are told in the census reports.

But there is the other side. There are thousands of Negroes living in a condition of ignorance and poverty which is a disgrace to so-called civilization—just as certain streets of New York are a disgrace, and certain streets of old York are a disgrace. I mention old York, because some who are here this evening may recall Mr. Rountree's striking work on "Poverty," based upon his studies in that city. His book led me a few years ago to see the worst conditions in that ancient town, and within a few months thereafter I traveled through the black belt of three of our Southern States. I saw masses of Negroes in counties where they number five and even more to one of the whites. I saw their wretched poverty and the little that is being done for them, the little that in some places they are even trying to do for themselves, so little is there to arouse any sentiment of thrift or improvement. It must be said, however, that there are not very many localities in which the Negroes are not trying, though it may be in a crude and blind way, to do something for church or school. They are not in many places so utterly hopeless as perhaps thirty percent of the people in York. They have more air and sun, and certainly a sunnier disposition. But they need and deserve, like all the poor, a better chance, and if we are wise we shall help them to have a better chance. Who can say that it will be to the advantage of the white race to have the Negroes in any community thriftless and ignorant?

About four-fifths of the Negroes are still living in the country districts, and there at present the chief problem lies. The betterment of the condition of the country Negro is the great immediate problem, not only for the sake of the individual Negro, but for the sake of the Negro problem as a whole. For unless the rural conditions are improved, the most enterprising of the country Negroes will flock more and more into the cities, leaving behind the more hopeless of their fellows, and creating a more difficult situation in the cities. If the improvement of

rural life is generally recognized as perhaps the greatest of present social problems, it is not hard to see that the problem is most acute in the rural districts of the South.

In the South, as everywhere, the heart of the problem of rural improvement is the land question. Where the Negroes have been able to acquire land, there the best conditions exist. In some counties conditions are such that very few Negroes have been able to acquire land. I drove twelve miles in Alabama and was informed that I had passed through but three men's land, all three of whom lived in cities. In a majority of counties however the conditions are different, and many Negroes have bought the land on which they live and work.

But the land question, under our present laws, must take care of itself. What can be done otherwise for the rural Negroes? I mention two things, referring to their religion and to their education. Far the most important and potent influence is the country preacher. From him the masses receive their ideals of duty and conduct, of life and death. From him come all their ideas above and beyond the routine of daily life in the field and cabin. Through him, more than in any other way, the masses of the Negroes can be influenced for better living. If I were a millionaire I would have a traveling commission of competent preachers, some white and some colored. I would have them attend every Baptist Association, every Methodist Conference, every meeting of preachers of whatever kind. I would have them go through the country and call together meetings of preachers. I would have them hold summer schools for preachers. And the burden of their message should be this: that salvation is now as well as hereafter and that clean, honest, industrial living is a vital part of religion. Furthermore I would place in every institution for the preparation of preachers a teacher of sanitation and home-making. In other words I would bring home to the minds of the preachers the conviction that their religion is meant for this world as well as for the next world.

The next great question is of course that of schools. Here the most important feature of the situation at this time is the improvement of the rural schools, and the main need is a larger appropriation from the public funds for this purpose. The edu-

cation of the masses of the Negroes can be affected only through the regular public school system, which is the only method for the general education of any people. In regard to the elementary public school, especially those in the country, there is a widespread opinion that they are ineffective, that they need almost a revolution in their curriculum. The movement for introducing into them home industries, for making them fitter in the way of touching the life about them, and, at the same time, for putting more life into the teaching, has been generally welcomed. Here is a tremendous field for further philanthropy and outside assistance. And if the schools become thus changed and improved, if their education can be seen to be effective, then without doubt there will be more disposition to appropriate money in their behalf.

Try to picture any one of a hundred counties with their large Negro population, mostly ignorant and living from hand to mouth, with little or no thought of cleanliness or thrift, and with children swarming about the one or two room cabin. There may be in the community a so-called school, open during three or three and a half months, at some time in the year, with a generally incompetent, poorly paid teacher, teaching in a rude church or a ruder shanty of some kind, teaching by rote some lifeless and remote facts, out of lifeless books. Better than nothing this is, but how little. And with only a little more money and a little more intelligence how much better it might be. It is one of the pities of the situation that by not spending more on rural education, for whites as well as blacks, we are almost wasting much that we do spend. This is the fact which we of the South will realize more and more, as we come to realize the bottom fact, that it will not pay, not pay in any sense of the word, to allow any portion of our population to remain uneducated.

I have mentioned the three sure processes for immediate betterment, namely, the acquirement of decent homes, the enlightenment of the preachers as to practical religion, and the improvement of the schools. Whether or not these three things will solve the whole problem, grant that there will always persist a race problem, yet these things are good in themselves. No one can deny that it is well for the man who tills the soil to hold the

soil. No one can deny that a religion which brings home the realization of human obligations is good for any human being. No one can deny that an education which brings intelligence in the performance of daily tasks and daily living is good, not only for the individual, but for all who must come in contact with him. So I repeat that in these three lines of progress we must place hope and confidence.

I said a moment ago, "granted that there will always persist a race problem." Who can doubt that there will be a race problem, if we choose to call it so, so long as human beings of different races inhabit the earth? We have no monopoly of the problem in the South. It may be said to be world-wide. Races are different, and the differences, so far as we know, will persist. In our Southern states we have to face the differences and the difficulties. But what other solution is there than to acknowledge differences, and yet to work in all necessary co-operation and to cultivate good will? Neither the idea of wholesale colonization, nor the idea of wholesale extinction, any longer receives serious second thought. Are not all such speculations and predictions quite futile? Must we not realize the fact that the Negro is here to stay, and mainly in the South?

None of us can read the future, and I never think of the prophecies about the race problem without the inclination to quote the lines in Henry IV:

"You are too shallow, Hastings, far too shallow,  
To sound the bottom of the aftertimes."

But in the meanwhile there is enough at hand to engage our attention for a time. The old English proverb, echoed by Chaucer in his Good Counsel, said, Do the next thing; and for us, whatever the future may hold in it of uncertainty or perplexity, the nearest duty lies in the direction of good-will, coöperation, and practical helpfulness. Our immediate problems are better homes, a fuller conception of religion, and a more efficient system of education.

## Black-Belt Labor, Slave and Free.

---

BY ULRICH B. PHILLIPS.

---

The so-called negro race in America has widely varied qualities. Many quadroons and mulattoes and some exceptional negroes possess mental traits identical with those characteristic of white men; they follow the same habits of thought and action and respond in the same way to economic and social stimuli. But the great mass of ordinary negroes are in a radically different category, thinking and acting in distinctly negro-like ways and thereby presenting peculiar problems of economic and social adjustment. The negroes who dwell in the Southern districts of negro majorities—the black belts—usually show the fullest negro traits; and the blacker the belt, other things equal, the more thoroughly negro-like is the general run of the negroes. In the present discussion we shall not be concerned with exceptional conditions. We shall consider the mass where the mass is the greatest and the type the most undiluted. The cotton belt will afford our chief data, for the double reason that that industry has long employed the greatest bulk of negroes and that for it the census returns are more illuminating than for any other in the premises.

In the ante-bellum régime slavery afforded the means of policing the negroes and transferring their control from hand to hand in the labor market. With it was intimately associated the plantation system, providing a definite routine of simple tasks and supervision to ensure their performance. It also provided incidentally a certain degree of industrial and social education for the negroes. The régime of plantation slavery in fact permitted capable managers to make typical American negroes as efficient laborers, doubtless, as the world has ever seen under any form of coercion. In both social and industrial schooling plantation slavery was immensely effective. Some masters and overseers, it is true, were too degraded and brutal to give the slaves under them a chance for sound progress through imitation. On

the other hand some masters were too easy-going to drill their slaves in efficient labor. Indeed the slaves had many leverages, and oftentimes they ruled their masters more than the masters ruled them. But generally speaking the slaves in the ante-bellum South were far more productive as well as more civilized than any other mass of negroes had become at that time. Furthermore, slavery and the slave-trade made the labor supply phenomenally responsive to industrial opportunity. Its mobility is demonstrated by the slave-labor occupation of virtually the whole of the cotton belt's vast area within forty years from the time when the cotton industry began to be firmly established. Since emancipation, on the other hand, the negro population has almost wholly staid in the districts where the slaveholding régime left it.

Tradition in various localities of the South relates almost incredible tales of cotton output by the slaves of vigorous planters. Authentic records of individual achievements are lacking; but the census returns are eloquent enough. To use these in a comparison between ante-bellum and present-day conditions it is necessary to choose districts where negroes have continually done the bulk of the work: where towns, which always disturb the statistical picture of agriculture, are few and small; and where there have occurred no revolutionary changes in the methods of cultivation, such as have been caused by the enormous resort to commercial fertilizers in the piedmont and the pine-barrens, and in the western cotton belt by the invasion of the Mexican boll-weevil. Probably the area most truly typical of those where no change has occurred of importance comparable to the freeing of the slaves is the Yazoo Delta in Northwestern Mississippi. Let us take four counties strung along the Mississippi river in this district, none of them containing towns of consequence, all of them blessed with the inexhaustible fertility of alluvium, and all producing before and since the war little but cotton and corn in a quite steady ratio. The four counties, Tunica, Coahoma, Bolivar, and Issaquena, had in 1860 a population of 4,384 whites, 25,592 slaves and no free negroes; a total of 29,976 of whom 85.4% were blacks and 14.6% whites. In 1910 these counties contained 12,243 whites and 90,001 negroes; a total of 102,244,



with a black percentage of 88. Now in 1860 the cotton product of the four counties was 100,972 bales averaging four hundred pounds each, while in 1910, a typical year of the recent period, it was 156,384 bales of five hundred pounds average. Converting the figures for 1860 into five-hundred-pound bales, and reducing the output to a per-capita basis for the gross population, it appears that for each inhabitant these counties produced two and one-third bales in 1860 as compared with one and a half bales in 1910. In short, the per-capita product has declined by thirty-five per cent. A large number of other counties chosen at random throughout the rest of the cotton belt confirm these indications of the Yazoo Delta that the emancipation of the rural black-belt negroes has diminished their industrial efficiency.

On the other hand, the areas of white majorities in the cotton belt, in all cases where no great diversion of labor has occurred as into the cotton mills, show a heavy increase in cotton production. The per-capita crop has generally doubled or trebled, and in many districts it has increased ten fold. In recent decades, indeed, the most striking development has been in certain large districts of Texas, Oklahoma, and western Texas, where the population is about nine-tenths white and where the cotton crop often runs to two bales per-capita in spite of considerable activities in other industries. Texas alone, with less than one-sixth of her population negroes, and containing less than one-tenth of the Southern negro population, now produces more cotton than all the South did in 1860, and from one-third to nearly half as much as all the other cotton states produce today. In short the negroes have apparently lost to the whites the larger half of the cotton growing industry, without any considerable gain in any other field to offset the loss; and the average cotton-field negro is only two-thirds as efficient as his grandfather was at his own age as a slave.

Various other data tend to confirm these conclusions. To take extreme cases: in the year 1906 the state of Alabama leased a large number of able-bodied convicts at the rate of forty-five dollars per month. At the same time in the South Carolina lowlands the current rate of hire for plough hands was four dollars a month, together with a cabin, an acre or two of land, and "Sat-

urdays off with the mule;" and the lessees of the Alabama convicts probably made a larger profit per head from the work of their laborers than did the South Carolina planters from the labor of their free negroes. This comparison commits the fallacy, perhaps, of proving too much. But standing baldly as it does, it points the moral of modern free-negro inefficiency. It suggests that the mass of average black-belt negroes has not been reached, and it is by no means sure to be reached for beneficial effect, by the existing agencies for education and stimulus.

In the slaveholding industry no money wages were paid, and in present day Southern agriculture most of the laborers work on some basis of tenantry or crop-sharing. To determine the cost of labor year by year under either régime would be too intricate a task for the present occasion. But a comparison of conditions and tendencies will serve our purpose.

The cost of a slave's labor arose partly from his being a living creature requiring sustenance, and partly from his being a "chat-tel" the ownership of which involved the investment of capital. As a human being he (and all his group) had to be provided constantly with sufficient food, clothing and shelter to preserve his life, health and strength, and, in some degree at least, his happiness and loyalty. He must also be given medical attention in time of need, and perhaps some occasional reward as an incentive. All this was required for the sake of the master's prosperity, if from no other consideration. On the other hand the work must be neither debilitating in character nor exhausting in quantity. As a matter of fact, in cotton cultivation all of the routine work was and is relatively light by reason of the very nature of the industry. After the land has been prepared for the crop the heaviest task in the field is the mere trudging behind a one-horse plough; and the hours of day-light in Southern latitudes are never long enough for this to exhaust the strength of an able-bodied man. For the cotton belt, and still more for the tobacco districts, the tales told by the abolitionists that slaves were systematically worked to death for the greater profit of their masters were obviously the purest fabrications. And even in the rice and sugar industries it is impossible to see how masters could profitably follow such a practice in the latter ante-bellum period, in view of the prices for slaves which then prevailed.



As a chattel the slave had to earn the interest on his investment before he could earn any profit for his owner. And still other deductions must be made if we apply sound principles of accounting. The value of the chattel was liable to impairment or destruction by death, disease, accident, or escape. To distribute this liability over a term of years it would be necessary to estimate the rate of risk and add to each year's expenses appropriate sums for casualty insurance, as well as the taxes levied on slave property. Depreciation, however, should probably not be reckoned, for the advancing years and declining capital value of the adult slaves, along with the deaths of the aged, were offset under ordinary circumstances by the birth and growth of children.

In the cotton growing industry the cost of labor constituted by far the greatest part of the total cost of production, and prior to the civil war nothing of much importance occurred after the industry had reached its routine basis, say in 1820, to increase the efficiency of labor. Under such conditions an essential requirement for permanent prosperity was that the cost of labor should bear a fairly steady relation to the value of the product. As to slave sustenance this requirement was easily met, for the average plantation raised most of its own provisions and the prices of supplies in the market were fairly steady. But with all the other elements in labor-cost the circumstances were quite otherwise, since they varied with the widely fluctuating prices of slaves in the market. Let us consider these fluctuations, taking as the standard the average prices of "prime field hands" in the cotton belt. A prime field hand, be it said, was an able-bodied young man of no special skill. In 1795, just before the beginning of the upland cotton industry, this price was a little below \$300. By 1800 the new demand carried it to \$450, and the closing of the African slave-trade in 1808 caused a further rise to \$600 in the following year. Then the war with Great Britain reduced it to \$450 again in 1813; but the return of peace, bringing a great stimulus to industrial expansion, carried it to \$1,000 in 1818. The overproduction of cotton and the panic of 1819, however, depressed it to \$700 in 1821. After nearly a decade of quite stable slave prices a new inflation carried them to \$1,300 for prime field hands in 1837; but the prevalence of exceedingly

hard times in the first half of the forties drove them down to \$600 in 1844. With the recovery of the cotton market after 1845 and its firmness at from ten to twelve cents a pound throughout the fifties, there occurred a vigorous and unremitting rise in slave prices until in 1860 prime field hands brought from \$1,600 to \$2,000 a head in the various cotton-belt districts.

These fluctuations paralleled those of cotton prices to some degree in various brief periods; but in the lapse of decades cotton trended downward as positively as slaves trended upward. At the beginning of the century upland cotton ranged about thirty cents a pound in the New York market. In 1803 it fell to twenty cents, and during the war of 1812 it dipped as low as eleven cents. The arrival of peace sent it up sharply to thirty cents, and the panic of 1819 brought it down to fifteen, where it staid off and on until the early thirties. It then rose to fifteen cents in 1835, but promptly entered upon a disastrous decline to the starvation level of six cents in New York, which meant four or five cents in the interior cotton districts. In the later fifties it recovered, as we have already seen, and ranged for the rest of the ante-bellum period between ten and twelve cents at New York.

Now let us convert slave prices into terms of cotton. In 1800, in round figures, a prime field hand could be bought for 1,500 pounds of the ginned staple; in 1810 the price had doubled; in 1820 it had risen to 5,000 pounds of cotton; in 1830 it was 7,000 pounds; in 1840, 8,000; in 1850, 10,000; and in 1860 it ranged between 15,000 and 18,000 in different parts of the cotton belt. Thus the price of slaves as measured in the chief product of their labor increased at least ten fold between 1800 and 1860, and three fold after 1820.

In the early twenties and before, a planter could buy slaves and raise cotton at a substantial profit above maintenance, interest, and insurance charges. After 1835 he could no longer do so. In 1839 and the early forties thousands of planters were bankrupted, and those who were unscathed esteemed themselves extremely fortunate. In the fifties, which by comparison were spoken of as prosperous, it was only the most talented managers and those whose plantations lay in the most fertile districts who

could buy slaves and from their labor earn anything beyond interest charges. The average planter seems to have gained only from two to five per cent. on his investment. Slaves, indeed, had grown too precious to be risked in any but the most salubrious employments. Such planters as were near the seaports eagerly hired gangs of German and Irish immigrants for ditching and levee building and any other needful work too heavy for performance without danger of strain and injury. No man could afford to take chances with a thousand-dollar slave.

In the present-day régime of the black belts it is hard to speak with confidence as to the cost of labor. But it is fairly certain that, in spite of the diminished efficiency of the general run of the negroes, the labor cost per pound of cotton is not so great as it was in 1860, and that there is no tendency toward the unremitting enhancement of the labor-cost ratio such as there was in the slaveholding régime.

Thinking men of the ante-bellum South opposed the overthrow of slavery partly because they hoped the abolitionists' clamor would die away and permit the South to remodel her own system quietly and constructively, partly because of a dislike for disturbing vested interests, but mainly, it appears, because they had an exaggerated dread of the social disorder to follow the relaxation of control over the negro population. There was some apprehension that emancipation would reduce the efficiency of the negroes, but little belief that slave labor *per se* was more profitable to the employers than free labor would be.

Slavery was abolished against the resistance of the South, and in a way which was one of the most injurious conceivable for the employers. But since the agony of the so-called Reconstruction period the Southern community has taken a new start, and today it is taking stock of the situation and making plans for the future. The South needs knowledge of her own past and present in order to frame the most intelligent plans. No one anywhere has but a smattering knowledge and a haphazard understanding of the ante-bellum régime. There is room here for patriotic service by vigorous students by scores and hundreds. But still greater is the need for men of constructive leadership

to lay out programmes and set sound examples for the people to follow.

Under ordinary circumstances free laborers in general cannot secure rewards too high for the welfare of the communities in which they dwell. The higher their earnings, the greater their contributions to the social fund. One of the surest indications of general prosperity, in fact, is the prevalence of high wages,—and a greater general prosperity is one of the things which the South most imperatively needs. Its achievement would help immensely to solve a multitude of problems. The purchase money for the slaves brought into any district was a contribution paid to the people of other communities, whose industrial vigor seems generally to have been relaxed by the receipt of this tribute. But the wages paid to free labor stay largely in the district itself, to swell the earnings of the merchants and bankers and the professional classes and to promote new enterprises for industrial diversification. However it may be achieved, therefore, whether by the increase of paternalistic supervision or otherwise, one of the chief needs of the whole South, one of the tasks which whites, blacks, and mulattoes must yet combine to accomplish, is the diminution of irresponsibility and the improvement of industry among the general run of the negroes.

## What Is Justice between White Man and Black in the Rural South?

---

BY CLARENCE POE.

---

I am to talk to you tonight about the welfare of the rural South. I should not need to invoke your interest in any rural problem, standing as I do in an institution founded by Thomas Jefferson, who constantly reiterated his belief that the political health of a State is measured by the proportion of its people engaged in agriculture—Jefferson who declared that “a prosperity built on the basis of agriculture is that which is most desirable to us;” and that “our government will remain virtuous as long as our people are chiefly agricultural.” In an institution founded by Jefferson, I repeat, I should not need to remind you of Goldsmith’s “Ill fares the land;” of the great historian Ferrero’s declaration that “the disease which killed the Roman Empire was excessive urbanization;” nor of Rider Haggard’s history-supported warning to our race that “the flocking of the land-born to the cities is the handwriting on the wall of our civilization.”

Nor should I need, standing in an institution nurtured by the love of your historic State, to invoke your interest in any problem affecting the future of the South; for your battlefields have reminded me afresh of Senator Carmack’s eloquent expression of the love that all of us feel for our home-land which “has broken the ashen crust and moistened it with tears, a land scarred and riven with the plowshare of war and billowed by the graves of her dead,” but a land to which “every drop of our blood, every fiber of our being, every pulsation of our hearts, is consecrated forever.”

I ask only that you young men shall consider the facts I present with that ardent and high-minded love for the South which distinguished our fathers, and with that high seriousness which made President Cleveland declare when asked what was the greatest problem confronting the American people:

"Oh, there is only one. We can see our way through most of our difficulties. We can at least imagine a solution of all problems but one. But the Negro question baffles everybody's understanding. No one knows what the answer is. No one knows when it will demand an instant answer."

## I.

What then are the outstanding facts that face us as we consider the future of the South's rural civilization? The outstanding facts are these, that the rural South—and by the "rural South" I mean the farms themselves and not the so-called "rural sections" of the census which include all towns of less than 2,500 people—the real rural South is getting blacker instead of whiter. Sparsely settled though it is, a veritable Eden for agricultural production and with the bare fringe of its possibilities not yet touched, we yet face the fact that in the last census decade, a decade when its white population ought to have increased ten times as fast as its negro population, the white acreage actually decreased and the Negro acreage increased; the proportion of white farmers decreased and the proportion of Negro farmers increased; and the Negroes gained faster in farm ownership (17 per cent. as compared with 12 per cent. for the whites), while—most sinister fact of all—it was the whites who fastest lost their homes and joined the tenant class (188,000 increase in number of white tenant farmers in the last decade, or 27 per cent., against only 118,000 increase in Negro tenant farmers, or 21 per cent.).

Take our South Atlantic States, principally Virginia, North Carolina, South Carolina, Georgia, and Florida. Here the number of white farmers during the last census decade increased only 12 per cent., negro farmers 23 per cent.—nearly twice as fast. In the South Central States, Kentucky, Tennessee, Mississippi, and Alabama, white farmers increased 12 per cent. and negro farmers 21 per cent.—nearly twice as fast. In the west South Central section as a whole, the incoming of white settlers into Texas and Oklahoma resulted in a different showing, but the figures given for our eastern South form a striking index to conditions in all the vast region between the Potomac and the Mississippi.



Or rather I should say that we shall have a more accurate and more striking index to conditions when we consider the facts just given in their relation to the population increases of each race. Take the South Atlantic States. Their total white population increased 20 per cent. but the number of white farmers only 12 per cent. On the other hand, the total number of negroes increased only 10 per cent. but the number of negro farmers 23 per cent. In other words, the number of our white farmers increased only 60 per cent. as fast as our white population, whereas negro farmers increased 230 per cent. as fast as the negro population.

Similarly in the East South Central States the white population increased 14 per cent. but the number of white farmers only 12 per cent., whereas the negroes, with a 6 per cent. increase in population, made a 21 per cent. increase in number of farmers. In other words, the number of white farmers increased only 86 per cent. as fast as the white population, while the negro farmers increased 350 per cent. as fast as the negro population.

Here then is your supreme fact: that with present tendencies the negroes are capturing the rural South both from the standpoint of occupancy and ownership. It is just fifty years this month since freedom came. Yet within this period, that is to say, within the lifetime of men not yet old, the negroes have reached the position where they occupy half as good a position as our white farmers themselves with regard to ownership of the farms they operate—have reached a position where they own a farm-land area greater than the total area of Scotland or Greece and two-thirds the total area of England. In one state, Oklahoma, the *percentage* of tenants is greater for whites than for negroes, while in five other States—Virginia, North Carolina, Tennessee, Arkansas, and Texas—the actual *number* of white tenants is greater than the actual number of negro tenants.

## II.

These are the facts, facts vouched for by the unimpeachable witness of the United States Government, that confront us. What do they indicate, my friends, except that under present conditions the rural South is being lost to the white man? And



what does this mean for the future of our race and our section, town as well as country? With what concern should the South regard the swift and steady deterioration of her rural citizenship, the only foundation stone upon which she should rear her mighty empire of tomorrow?

But our problem is, What can we do about it and yet be just to the Negro? For the chivalrous South, in my opinion, earnestly yearns as I myself yearn to be just to the black man. I have risked unpopularity to defend his rights in previous years, and my desire now, no less than ever before, is simply to see justice done between the two races—not a superficial justice but a deep and elemental justice.

Now when this question, "What is justice between white man and black?" is put to the average citizen of other sections, he answers with pathetic assurance and finality, "Equality." But the tragedy of our case is that the answer is not so simple; that no answer to so complex a problem is ever so simple. The noble doctrine of equality if only considered superficially, may lead us into fatally vicious negation of its intrinsically righteous principle if we do not remember that great modifying principle recently reiterated by Dr. Richard T. Ely, of Wisconsin:

*"There is no greater inequality than the equal treatment of unequals."*

There is a thought that I wish every man in America were forced to memorize. We cannot put a man and a skunk in the same room and say we are giving them equal treatment. Why? Because their standards are different. We cannot turn a dozen mountain goats and a dozen Kentucky colts into the same dry winter pasture, and say we are giving them equal treatment. Why? Because their living standards are different. Similarly I cannot sew a bushel of wheat and a bushel of thistle in my fields, or a quart of jimson-weed seed with a quart of snap beans in my garden, and leave them to grow up together, and claim to be giving them equality in any real sense of the term. I cannot put my boy in a stable with my colt and say I am treating them equally well. And every recurring summer teaches us that tares will flourish under conditions fatal to the wheat; that cockle-burrs will grow riotously in a neglected field in which every

corn stalk has yellowed to a barren death; that we must spray and prune and nurture the apple, the peach and the rose, while the thorn and the thistle seem to thrive by neglect.

In other words, my friends, throughout the animal and vegetable world we see the fundamental truth exemplified that "there can be no greater inequality than the equal treatment of unequals," and the principle holds just as good in our world of economics and sociology. If you should turn loose two million Japanese or Chinese and two million white men on California farms and give them so-called equal privileges, there would not be genuine equality for the white men. The Caucasian with his higher living standards would not have an equal chance with the less civilized Orientals. As Professor Branson puts it:

"A people with lower living standards will always prevail against a people with undefended higher living standards."

In other words, wherever two men are doing the same work, the man who can live on fifty cents a day will always crowd to the wall the man whose higher civilization requires a dollar or more to maintain—unless that higher civilization and living standard are properly safeguarded.

And so in the rural South today, my friends, we see another illustration of the fact that genuine equality, genuine justice, must be not that of the letter which killeth but of the spirit which maketh alive. If equality for two living things—whether plants or animals or persons or races—if equality does not mean equality for each to grow, develop and perpetuate its own life, its own excellences, its own achievements and standards built up through the long process of evolution, if equality does not mean that, then that equality is false and spurious, a snare and a delusion; and a heinous repudiation in fact of all that it professes to be in name. And it is today just such a travesty and mockery of equality that hangs like a blight and a pall all over the rural South. In the name of justice for the negro the most hideous injustice is done to the white man. In the name of equality for the lower order of civilization the most ruinous inequality is forced upon the higher order. In the name of benevolence for a backward race an economic and social situation of unimagined malevolence forces the advanced race away from the

lands our own ancestors rescued from the wilderness and the savage.

Are the negroes gaining on the white farmers in the South today, are they capturing the rural South and Africanizing the fairest portion of America, because they are superior to white farmers in intelligence? No. Because they are superior in industry? No. Because they are superior in character? No. They are gaining for none of these reasons. They are gaining simply because present conditions give the negro two unfair advantages in competition with the white man.

First, an unfair *economic* advantage in that the negroes are able to buy land and make crops on a scale of living, clothing and housing that the respectable white farmer and his family doing the same character of work cannot meet.

Second, a *social* advantage in that when negroes move into a white neighborhood, or begin to outnumber the whites in a neighborhood, or become of bad character, the whites may be forced to move away because there is no longer an adequate white social life, or for the peace and security of the white farmer's wife and daughters.

I know how it was and yet is in my old home neighborhood. My own father in his old age was forced to leave his lifelong home and the home of his father before him, simply because the crowding in of Negroes around us made the place unsatisfactory for reasons both of family protection and of neighborly social life. An excellent white man and his wife who were my tenants on the same place three years ago left for the same reason. A cousin who has built on the same farm fears that the same forces will cause him to move. If I had to sell the place it would not bring half what it would bring if it were in a thrifty white neighborhood. And only recently I had a letter from one of the dearest old ladies I have ever known, a woman who, left a widow on a small farm, moved to a town in another state. She wrote:

"Many a man has died and left his wife and children in very good circumstances with a little farm and stock where she and her children could have stayed and worked and been happy. But for fear of the Negro she would have to pull up and leave it all and go to the factory with a sad heart and put her darling children to work from daybreak till

dark. The Negro is free and the white child has often become the slave through fear of the Negro. I myself would never have left my home but for this fear."

These are typical cases. Moreover, where there is no actual physical fear of the Negroes, their presence may nevertheless drive white people away from a neighborhood simply because these Negroes occupy farms that white people would otherwise occupy, and for this reason there is no social life for the white people who remain, and schools, churches, and all the agencies that make life attractive dwindle and starve.

Not only this, but the Negro has an unfair advantage for taking the rural South to himself in that white farmers not only will not move into an all-negro neighborhood, while negroes do not hesitate to move into any white community, but furthermore it is an almost invariable rule that when he buys out a white man, it lowers land values, injures social conditions and makes it easier for negroes to get more land, whereas when a white man buys land in a community, the rule is that it increases land values and makes it harder for him to get more.

If I know my own heart I believe in being just to the negro. I believe with all my soul that "in the long years of God the strong cannot oppress the weak without destruction." With all possible yearning for truth I have joined the hosts of other earnest Southerners who in prayer for light have flung themselves:

"Upon the great world's altar stairs  
That slope through darkness up to God."

And I repeat that as God knows my heart I believe in being just to the Negro, but I also believe—and here is the thought that I fear has never occurred to thousands and thousands of earnest, sincere, well-meaning students of the problem—I also believe in being just to the laboring white man whose ancestors through centuries of toil and aspiration and discipline have wrought out the civilization which we enjoy—the civilization to which the negro, moreover, owes the very peace, safety and prosperity he enjoys.

And I tell you tonight, my friends, with all the earnestness of my soul, that present conditions in the South are not just to the

laboring white man—that the white farmer hasn't an equal chance with the negro in the struggle for future control of the rural South. I tell you that while I know that here and there individual negroes are treated with injustice—hideous injustice—yet considered as a race *the really disadvantaged and handicapped man in the South today is not the negro*—not the negro who but yesterday in African barbarism, is now becoming heir to the most advanced civilization in the most favored portion of the whole earth; not the negro who as a matter of fact, is the best-off, the most advantageously situated, non-white man in the whole world today; and better-off even, according to Booker Washington's own statement, than the less favored laboring men of our own race in Europe.

Consider the Chinese, infinitely the negro's superior, with a civilization, a literature, a religion, a government, science, inventions, and a social order, that are yet the admiration of all thoughtful people; consider the Hindus, equalling the Chinese in many respects and excelling them in philosophy and literary genius—and yet when I was on the other side of the world I found the Chinese and Hindus working for ten cents a day, whereas the American negro, whose race has made no important contribution to civilization, has made no great achievement in science, government or religion, makes ten times ten cents a day solely by reason of contact with the white man's own opulent civilization. And furthermore by reason not of his superiority but by reason of his very inferiority, in the matter of lower living standards, this American negro is now able to outdo the white man in getting possession of the land, the fundamental source of all wealth.

→ My point then is that *the really handicapped and disadvantaged man in the fierce industrial struggle in the South today is not the negro but the white farmer or laborer who must compete with a race with lower living standards, and whose white social life throughout the rural South is impoverished if not imperiled by the almost universal sandwiching of white and negro farmers.* Are not these really the ones for whom the concern of our statesmen and builders of tomorrow, our lovers of justice, should go out—these humbler white brethern out on the farms and in the

shops and factories who are fighting the hard battles of our race and of a sorely pressed civilization, yet who are too often dismissed as being only "poor white trash," while benevolent people overflow with sympathy for the supposedly downtrodden negro?

Less than a year ago I heard Rev. Dr. Graham Taylor, in a sermon at the National Conference of Charities and Corrections declare that the striking miners in Colorado in attempting to maintain their higher living standards, a higher ideal of civilization for themselves, their wives, and little ones, were battling for a cause as holy as martyrs had died for in other ages. What then, I ask, about the living standards of the Southern white farmer? Is it not just as high and holy a duty to protect the white man's civilization, social heritage and living standards that our ancestors have wrought out through patient generations, as it is to protect the negro in the rights to which his individual and racial achievement entitle him?

But here the question arises, What can we do about it? What can be done and what is in prospect to be done to remedy the inequality and injustice that now handicap the white man in the rural South in his efforts to perpetuate and develop a richer rural civilization?

My own answer is that I believe the immediate need is for the steady development of homogenous white communities in the South instead of the present indiscriminate sandwiching of white and negro farms; and that we should begin with *race segregation in land-ownership* as the first step in this direction. And while I have argued for this as a matter of justice to the white man, I believe it will be best for both races. For after all has been said about economic conditions, the fact remains that the most crying need of both races in the rural South today is for a richer social and community life—for better supported, more forceful and satisfying schools, churches, farmers' and farm women's clubs, corn clubs, canning clubs, libraries, lyceums, musicals, athletic sports, picnics, rallies, and all other agencies of rural comradeship—and in none of these agencies of a richer social life can the two races mingle. It is inevitable, therefore, in our sparsely settled South that in two school districts each



with fifty negro families and fifty white families neither schools nor churches nor social life can be half as good as for either race as if the hundred families of each race were grouped together.

In other words, ignoring entirely the matter of a feeling of security and safety for the wives and children of our white farmers, we have to face the fact that in every Southern neighborhood so long as we maintain our fundamental policy of social separation, the white schools will be the poorer, the churches will be poorer, the social life and community life will be poorer, just in proportion as negro residents displace white residents. And because it is not practicable to carry race segregation to the point of excluding negro tenants from white communities is no reason why we should not go as far as present circumstances will permit, and at least allow white communities to limit future land sales to white people.

In North Carolina such a plan for race segregation in land ownership is now definitely before the people and it is fast becoming an issue in other States. After being twice overwhelmingly endorsed by the State Farmers' Union, the measure came before the Senate of North Carolina at its recent session, in the form of a Constitutional Amendment to be submitted to the people, and at this its very first appearance lacked but two votes of receiving a majority of the votes cast. In fact, it received a clear majority of all the Democratic Senators voting, received the only Republican vote from that half of the State containing the principal part of the negro population, while from all that half of the State east of Greensboro where the people really know conditions, only four votes were cast against it. This Constitutional Amendment is intended simply to give effect to the demand of the organized white farmers of the State for a law providing:

"That wherever the greater part of the land acreage in any given district that may be laid off within a county is owned by one race, a majority of the voters of such a district should have the right to say, if they wish, that in future no land shall be sold to a person of a different race—provided such action is approved or allowed (as being justified by considerations of the peace, protection and social life of the community) by a reviewing judge or board of county commissioners."

The plan as you will see, is not for compulsory negro segregation by large districts but for voluntary white segregation by neighborhoods. And now let us see how such a plan will help. I have said that at present the white farmer suffers from two forms of unfair competition: (1) social, (2) economic. That the plan for land segregation between the races will prevent the crowding in of negro landowners into white communities and thus improve *social* conditions is obvious. But I wish especially to emphasize this further fact, that it will also safeguard our white farmers against the negro's unfair *economic* competition—a problem the whole South should think more seriously about. Of the nearly one-fifth of a million increase in number of tenant white farmers in the South in the last census decade—farmers of Southern white blood who are landless and homeless today, and who with their wives and families represent an increase in the South's white tenant population of nearly a full million in ten years—it is impossible to say how many are landless because of having to face competition with a race with lower living standards. And yet the obvious explanation Dr. Charles W. Stiles gave in New York sometime ago, "These people have been living for generations in competition with negro labor; that very competition has made them poorer," seems almost to have been suppressed in the South. Only recently the New York *Outlook*, in referring to the increase in cotton mill population in South Carolina, said that the poor white farmers "have been forced from the fields by Negro competition and have flocked to the mill towns."

Now through land segregation we should be able to encourage in homogeneous white communities those coöperative organizations of farmers for improved farm business that have revolutionized the agriculture of Denmark for example, "making it a little land full of happy people," and of Ireland and other European countries, and this is work in which it is almost impossible for whites and blacks to work together effectively. That is how our white farmers will be enabled to "defend their higher living standards," to use Professor Branson's term. In those all-white communities with the tonic atmosphere of equality, democracy, brotherhood, comradeship, and a higher intellectual

life, we should develop a more highly organized, diversified and profitable agriculture such as already characterizes our all-white Western States, Germany, France, Denmark, etc. The white farmers, in short—more intimately bound together and more effectively working together—through more scientific farming and better organized farm business, through coöperative ownership of improved machinery, coöperative breeding of better live stock, coöperation in crop production, crop marketing, and in all forms of farm activity, will get out of competition with low-grade negro labor, so that their higher living standards will no longer be “undefended” against negro competition. They will be defended through the coöperation and cumulative application of the white man’s higher skill and intelligence.

Moreover, a highly important point is this—that we can never hope to settle and develop the South, we can never hope to get the best class of Northern and Western farmers to come South, if they must settle in mixed neighborhoods. But they would come and come quickly to homogeneous all-white communities. I have letters from all sections of the North bearing on this point, and I have the testimony of some of the foremost railway authorities in the country. Race segregation in land ownership is indeed the first step toward securing for the South that denser population without which she is forever handicapped.

And now with this brief statement of its purposes, let us consider some of the questions that may be asked about the plan, for I am always anxious to consider any inquiries.

*Question:* “Is it constitutional—that is to say in harmony with the Constitution of the United States?”

*Answer:* Upon this point a remarkably able affirmative opinion has been prepared by Honorable James S. Manning, formerly a Judge of the North Carolina State Supreme Court, and I shall be glad to send a copy to anyone interested.

*Question:* “Has the plan been tried anywhere?”

*Answer:* Nowhere else in the world are negroes and whites in great numbers living together side by side as here in the South, except in South Africa. For years and years our brother English people there—white farmers who went from England there just as our ancestors came from England here—struggled with

just such conditions as we now face in the South. On a trip abroad three years ago the writer discussed the subject with one of the most eminent white statesmen of South Africa and he declared that they saw but one remedy, land segregation. Accordingly, on June 19th, last year, the law went into effect—a law which prohibits any negro in the Union of South Africa from buying or leasing land in the districts set apart for white ownership.

*Question:* “But if you permit negro tenants in a community are they not just as great a drawback to the white community and social life as negro landowners?”

*Answer:* The negro tenants are not permanent and immovable residents, and they are responsible to some person of the white race who can in a measure control them. Moreover, it is believed that where a white neighborhood votes to limit future land sales to whites, it will be easier to get good white tenants into such community, easier to get a sentiment favoring white tenants, and easier also to get settlers from other sections as I have just indicated, and thus gradually develop a wholly white community. Because we cannot get ideal conditions is no reason for not making as much progress as it is possible to make.

*Question:* “But is it not the thrifty, honest and unobjectionable negroes who buy land? Do these negro land-owners really injure the rural community?”

*Answer:* It is true that the negroes who become land-owners are usually the better class of negroes. But even if only good negroes bought land, bad negroes may inherit it, and it is in fact, a matter of common observation that the children of these original negro land-owners are frequently the most objectionable, immoral and insolent to be found. Consider my own case. Two old negroes years ago bought farms adjoining mine. They were good, honest, law-abiding old negroes and I have never heard a word against them. But the son of one of them, after long being a menace to the neighborhood, is just completing his third term in the penitentiary; while as for the descendants of the other, one negro was killed in their house in a drunken brawl and the community life has been demoralized by them in other ways. Moreover, if all negroes who bought land were good

negroes and their descendants could be guaranteed to be good negroes, they do not support the fundamental social institutions of our race.

*Question:* "But is it not true that white people leave the farms, not because of the negro, but because of unattractive conditions—because they want a better social life, better schools, and churches, less isolation?"

*Answer:* Here again we have in large measure a secondary form of our primary problem. Why are the schools, churches, social life, etc., as poor as they are in the average Southern neighborhood? Because of the negro. Because the schools, churches, social life, etc., merely exist at a half-dying rate with the support of only half the population instead of flourishing with the united support of all the population as is the case in wholly white communities. It is not supposed, of course, that land segregation between the races would stop the drift to the cities, but it is believed that it would so help check it and so attract the best class of white farming people from the North and West as to serve our one great need which is to make the South increasingly whiter instead of increasingly blacker.

*Question:* "But why can't the matter be settled by public opinion? That is to say, why can't the people of a community, when it seems wise, decide by private agreement not to sell more land to negroes?"

*Answer:* For the reason that if all resident land-owners should agree to this policy, in a very great proportion of our farm neighborhoods, the land is largely owned by absentee landlords who do not care how much they may offend public opinion in the community, nor how much the white residents may be discommoded, provided only they secure such prices as they wish for their land.

*Question:* "Suppose such a constitutional amendment as the North Carolina Legislature considered were passed, let us see just how the principle would be applied. In other words, what would be its practical legal operations?"

*Answer:* Well, the plan is just this. Take the old neighborhood in which I was reared. Suppose we wished to take advantage of this segregation act. We could lay off our district

and have a properly signed petition presented to the judge or the board of county commissioners certifying that two-thirds or three-fourths of the land in the district, as the case might be, was owned by our race and that for the promotion of the peace, protection and social life, we desired to vote on the question of limiting future land sales to persons of the same race. If the petition was in proper legal form and the other legal conditions were complied with, the question would be decided at the following biennial election. My idea would be to have it decided simply as a feature of the regular election and not have the added excitement of a special campaign or special election. If this proposition carried, then after a certain definite date no more land in such a district could be sold to a person of a different race.

*Question:* "But isn't the natural result of this legislation to make the negroes in large measure serfs and deprive them of their natural rights?"

*Answer:* No such spirit has been manifested on the part of the promoters of the movement. Their purpose is to protect our white civilization, not to oppress the negro. After such white neighborhoods as wish to do so adopt the land segregation principle, there will be abundant opportunity for negroes to buy land, and with the mobility of population at this time, there need be no fear upon this point. In fact, the proposal in North Carolina is that no race shall segregate to itself a greater proportion of the lands of the State than its proportion of the State's population—a plan which abundantly protects the negro's rights.

*Question:* "Will there not be danger then, on the other hand, that the white man's rights will be imperiled by negroes segregating communities to negro ownership?"

*Answer:* In the practical operation of the law it will be very rare that negroes will be able to segregate communities except where they own virtually all the land. The matter must come up upon petition from voters or freeholders, and in case the negroes should plan a gerrymandered district in such a way as to injure the rights of the whites, it will be easy for the white people to propose a larger district they could control. It would probably be provided, however, that no school district or town-



ship in which two-thirds of the land was owned by one race should be included in any larger district segregated to a different race.

*Question:* "But will not this proposition stir up race feeling?"

*Answer:* Present conditions which enable negroes to move into white communities and practically force white residents out, are creating the bitterest form of race feeling the South has ever known and unless some legal and reasonable plan of protection for white communities is offered, we shall have race trouble in far worse form than if the matter can be adjusted in some legal fashion, setting apart communities in which the negroes will know they cannot buy land but leaving others open to them.

And now let me say in conclusion that it is all true enough, of course, that allowing white communities to limit future land sales to white people will only partially solve the South's rural race problem, but it is at least a step in the right direction, the logical next step for our Southern people, and nearly all progress is made by steps. The plan will at least enable people in white communities to stand up and say, "We do not wish any more negroes as permanent and immovable residents here," and so stop absentee landlords (they are mainly responsible) from ignoring the public sentiment of the community. And having taken this first step it will be easier to build up a race pride in that district, easier to encourage white tenants to take the place of negro tenants, easier to get thrifty and enterprising farmers from other sections, and thus gradually develop a thoroughly prosperous and progressive neighborhood of comrade white farmers with all the inspiring advantages such a community affords.

#### IV.

Such then my, friends, are the advantages of the plan for land segregation between the races in the South, and while nobody supposes that a plan with positive advantages will not have some disadvantages, the net advantages in favor of the plan are such that the proposition I shall now submit can hardly be gainsaid. That proposition is this, that if the South had adopted this policy after the war, if it had been the custom all these years to

reserve certain communities exclusively for white ownership, keeping the land in white hands for the better support of the white social life, schools, churches, etc., making these neighborhoods virtual "cities of refuge" in which those who wished to escape mixed communities might build worthy homes for themselves and their descendants with the assurance that they would never be surrounded by negro land-owners—if this, I say, had been our policy all these years, can you imagine the revolution that would now be raised if it were proposed to repeal this happy exemption and throw these sections open to a mongrel population? And yet if it would have been a good policy to adopt fifty years ago, why is it not a good policy to adopt now?

Something must be done to save the rural South to the white race and here the appeal of the men of our race is not for injustice but for justice. They demand a genuine "equality"—the equal right of an advanced civilization to perpetuate itself by righteous regulations in competition with a lower civilization. They demand that you townsmen, who yourselves live in comfortable segregated white quarters in our cities, shall put yourselves by your sympathies in the place of the white farmer who may at any time have an absentee landlord put some vicious negro next to his isolated home and wife and children, miles and miles from police protection. They demand that you men in the professions and in commerce—as fully exempt from fierce economic conflict with a race with lower living standards as if you lived in another land—they demand that you shall consider the conditions of your less fortunate brethren who must sell every load of tobacco, every bale of cotton, every bushel of apples, every pound of meat, in competition with some negro farmer or tenant.

If a more practical program of betterment than Land Segregation Between the Races can be evolved, I shall rejoice; but in the face of the crises that confronts the South I submit that patriotic men should support a proposed remedy or propose a better one. As for the question whether segregation shall come through legal or voluntary means, it does not concern me—if only the practicability of non-legal methods can be demonstrated. I am not concerned about methods; I care only for results—re-

sults as they affect not only our rural population, my friends, but the whole future destiny of the South and of America. With the rural South getting whiter, as a result of giving rural, white civilization an equal chance for growth and development, no limit can be set to the South's development. With the rural South getting blacker, as a result of present unjust conditions, there is a complete denial of all the great future that otherwise seems open before us.

Ominous, relentless, inescapable, the problem faces us like another grim and terrible Sphinx, "propounding her riddle to the passers-by, which if they could not answer, she destroyed them"; there being indeed a sinister coincidence in the fact that the Greeks themselves in telling their own story of the half-beast, half-goddess, and her fatal riddle, were wont to say that the anger of the gods had brought her to them "from the farthest parts of Ethiopia."

Unless we be men of a little breed we must face the issue, and face it, my friends, with a sense of the magnitude of the interests involved, a realization that the destinies of a more than imperial land are placed in our keeping. In the eleven strictly Southern States from Virginia to Texas inclusive, to say nothing of the new empire of Oklahoma, we have an area greater than the combined areas of Greece, Italy, Switzerland, France, Germany, Holland, Belgium, Denmark, England, Scotland, and Ireland, and in the providence of God we may well achieve a civilization as varied and historic as theirs. It is in our power to be the builders of empires yet to be, to be among those who "raise up the foundations of many generations"; while on the other hand, by a fatal indifference and inertia we may prove ourselves traitors alike to the history and the future of our race.

William Archer, the eminent English student of our race problems puts the matter conservatively when he says of our Southern States that "they are fitted by their climate and resources to be not only a white man's land, but one of the greatest white men's lands in all the world." And with proper adjustment of our race problem, which he believes calls for an even more drastic race segregation than I have advocated—he declares that the South would "awaken as if from a nightmare to a realiza-

tion of its splendid destiny," and "a region perhaps the most favored by Nature in all the Western Hemisphere would stand where it ought to stand—in the van not only of civilization but of humanity."

With you and all other men who love their race and section, I leave this problem as a burden upon your hearts and consciences. No other condition in all our Southern country demands more emphatically of our statesmanship and of our citizenship a new and positive and constructive policy.

## The New Reconstruction.

---

BY WM. O. SCROGGS.

---

It is both an honour and a privilege to address the students of this University upon a subject of such concern as that of our race relations in the South. There is a growing conviction among our thoughtful citizens that while an immediate solution of the problem is not forthcoming, a more satisfactory racial adjustment is both necessary and practicable, and we may now observe many efforts under way to effect a reconstruction in the relationships of our white and coloured citizens. The ultimate success of this work of reconstruction will depend in no small degree upon the attitude which those who are now students in our colleges will assume toward the movement. If they are receiving such an education as will enable them to approach their civic duties and responsibilities with what we usually call the social point of view, if they are being imbued with the spirit of social service, we need fear no reactionary outcome. To address an audience, therefore, which is soon to constitute a very influential element of our younger citizenship, upon a topic of such vital importance to our people, is a task not to be lightly undertaken; but, as the minister says when he pronounces the marriage service, it should be entered upon "reverently, discreetly, advisedly, soberly, and in the fear of God."

One of the most important functions of our Southern colleges should be the development among their students of a rational viewpoint on all matters pertaining to interracial relations. Investigation has convinced many of us that while our people as a whole *feel* very intensely concerning this problem they *know* very little. Much of the discussion that we hear is merely an airing of the emotions. Very few of our people have any knowledge of the actual civic, economic, educational, hygienic, or moral conditions among the negroes even of their own communities, and with so little information at hand they can form

no real judgment concerning the public policy that every intelligent citizen should advocate.

Even among those who have devoted some study to the problem there seems at first sight to be utter confusion of thought. We find one student aglow with optimism; another filled with boding pessimism. One tries to show us that negro schools are steadily improving, that illiteracy is rapidly decreasing, that mob violence is less frequent, that race friction is diminishing, that the negro is increasing in numbers and in wealth, and that there is more sympathy and coöperation between the leaders of the two races than ever before. Another at the same time tells us that the gap between the races is widening, that the younger generation of whites has none of the sympathy for the negro that was found among the former slaveholders, that the black man is not holding his own in economic competition with the white, that his body is a prey to devastating diseases, and that relatively to the whites he is numerically declining. We even find contradictions made by the same individual. It is no uncommon thing, for example, to hear some one declare in one breath that the mulatto is the weakest and most vicious element among our coloured population, and in the next breath to declare with equal conviction that the only negroes who ever accomplish anything are those who have white blood in their veins. We may expect such contradictions so long as we persist in our inclination to loaf and generalize. The whole subject has been too much beclouded by individual prepossessions, and by conjecture and controversy.

Happily, we are coming more and more to realize this condition, and there is now apparent among our people a growing desire for such accurate knowledge as will aid in effecting a more satisfactory racial adjustment. The belief that once prevailed to the effect that the race problem would eventually solve itself if only agitation and discussion were not allowed to disturb the process of this adjustment is now quite generally discountenanced; for experience has amply demonstrated that agitation and discussion, like Banquo's ghost, will not down. For years the enlightened citizenship of the South has sat in dignified and respectable silence, while the demagogue quak-



ing with the assumed fear of "negro domination," and shouting in stentorian tones for "Anglo-Saxon supremacy," has summoned to the hustings and the polls the hosts of unlettered and unsocialized voters, who thereupon have elevated this agitator to a place among the seats of the mighty. Perceiving the wonderful possibilities which the race issue possesses in the way of vote getting, politicians have even gone to the extent of advocating mob violence, if this seemed an effective means of riding into power.

While such men have woefully misrepresented the South, they have reached a vastly greater audience than have those who entertain a more enlightened opinion. Moreover, while the designing office-seeker has raged and imagined vain things, our real leaders, by their silence, have perhaps created the impression that they too acquiesce in such views. Who can blame the man of the street if he is densely ignorant of the best Southern thought on the negro problem?

The time has arrived, however, when the thinking as well as the feeling South is beginning to make itself heard. The social conscience of our people found utterance in 1912 through the medium of the Southern Sociological Congress, which declared itself in favour of dealing with the race problem "in a spirit of helpfulness to the negro and of equal justice to both races." Even more auspicious is the interest of our Southern college students, which has manifested itself sometimes spontaneously by the formation of voluntary classes for the study of the negro problem. It is a fact of enormous import that fifteen thousand white college students in the past four years have read such a sane and suggestive little book as Dr. Weatherford's *Negro Life in the South*. And this is by no means all that is being done in our institutions of learning, as the Civic Club of this University has so well demonstrated. In the conferences on race problems at the meetings of the Southern Sociological Congress college professors have taken a prominent part. The Southern University Commission, consisting of one faculty representative from each of our Southern State universities, is devoting its efforts to the encouragement of the study of the race problem in our colleges and to the collection

and dissemination of such information as will aid in the development of sounder views with regard to relations between the races.

It is evident, then, that a reconstruction of race relations is actually under way, and that for some time it has been proceeding almost imperceptibly and yet steadily and irresistibly. This movement I choose to designate as the New Reconstruction. It is a movement for better education for both whites and blacks, for higher moral ideals and a socialized religion, for increasing coöperation between the best elements of both races, and for greater publicity for those whose views are based on reason rather than on prejudice and tradition. From this it will appear that the New Reconstruction in no respect resembles the so-called reconstruction of a past generation. The new movement realizes the value of racial solidarity and seeks to discover and work with the well-established currents of thought that underlie the life of our people. This were far better and far nobler than those fruitless efforts of the past to create an ideal democracy of non-homogeneous peoples by the mere fiat of the government. Unnatural and distasteful social and political arrangements, imposed upon any people, become a source of grave peril. The little province of Bosnia, torn from its natural associations became last summer the scene of a deed that has destroyed the peace of Europe. If England cannot assimilate Ireland, nor Germany Poland and Alsace-Lorraine, it is useless to look forward to the immediate and complete social equilibration of the whites and blacks in the United States. An immediate solution of the problem is not forthcoming. In any society there will always be a political problem so long as some men are conservative and some are radical, and there will always be a race problem so long as some men are white and some black. We might as well accept the dictum that the negro will never become an integral member of our social body so long as he remains a negro. The colour line is drawn everywhere—though with varying degrees of rigidity—and it will always prevent his complete participation in the life of the white community. Moreover, the more closely the two races are drawn together in large numbers on a plane of theoretical

equality, the more tightly will the colour line be drawn. For this reason the social barriers between Southern whites and blacks are much greater today than was the case under the slavery régime.

The New Reconstruction will come not by way of governmental fiat, but by the gradual process of evolution. All efforts in the past to hasten the social integration of the negro by means of legislation have resulted in failure. The thirteenth amendment secured for every black man the status of a free man but not that of a citizen. The dictum of the United States Supreme Court, enunciated in 1857 in the Dred Scott case, had been to the effect that slaves were not citizens and could not become citizens, even when emancipated or descended from free negroes. To secure for the freedman the full rights of citizenship, the Federal Congress in 1866 passed the first so-called Civil Rights Bill over the veto of President Johnson, and two years later the gist of this law was incorporated into the Federal Constitution as the fourteenth amendment. Following the ratification of this amendment, Congress in 1875 passed a second Civil Rights Act, which prescribed full and equal accommodations for all citizens, regardless of colour, in hotels, public conveyances, and places of amusement, and imposed heavy penalties for violations of the act.

This measure marked the culmination of Federal legislation in behalf of the civil rights of the black man. And now, four decades thereafter, we may well inquire what benefits this law and the constitutional amendment upon which it was founded have secured for the negro race. The fourteenth amendment, instead of being employed, as its authors intended, for the protection of the coloured man, has been invoked by corporate wealth for its protection against hostile State legislation. According to Mr. Charles W. Collins, by 1912 604 cases involving the interpretation of this amendment had been passed upon by the Supreme Court, and of these only twenty-eight bore any relation to the status of the negro, and only six of these were decided in his favour. The court early declared that in case the rights of a citizen were curtailed by the private act of an individual, the citizen should look to his State and not to the

Federal government for his protection, inasmuch as the amendment was designed only to prevent a *State* from abridging the privileges and immunities appertaining to Federal citizenship. Reasoning along similar lines, the Court in 1883 declared the Civil Rights Act of 1875 to be unconstitutional, and thus virtually served notice upon the negro that he was no longer the ward of the nation, but that now he was to take the rank of "a mere citizen," whose rights were "to be protected in the ordinary modes by which other men's rights are protected." This decision marks the close of the régime of special protection for the negro and the beginning of what we may call the period of natural selection.

The efforts to bestow the ballot upon the negro by governmental fiat have likewise met with failure. In 1865 persons of colour had full political rights in only five States. In the next four years State constitutional amendments conferring the suffrage upon the negro were submitted to the voters in nine Northern States and were rejected in seven of them. The fifteenth amendment, proclaimed in effect on March 30, 1870, would never have been ratified without the assent of the former Confederate States, and without the rule of the bayonet in the South this assent would never have been secured. The negro enjoyed the full use of the ballot only so long as Federal troops had control of Southern elections. Following their withdrawal, the black man was debarred from the polls sometimes by force and sometimes by fraud, until the whites wearied with such extra-legal and illegal devices, undertook his disfranchisement by legal methods. It is worth recording that the States in which the negroes outnumbered the whites took the lead in this movement,—Mississippi in 1890, South Carolina in 1895, Louisiana in 1898. Then Alabama followed in 1901, North Carolina and Virginia in 1902, and Georgia in 1908. To achieve the disfranchisement of the negro, these States have taken cognizance of certain characteristics of the coloured race which may be used to bar him from the polls without expressly excluding him on the ground of race, colour, or previous condition of servitude. Legal restrictions based on the ability to read and write, ownership of property, payment of poll tax, long periods of residence,

good character, good understanding of the constitution, military service, and voting ancestors have fully achieved the purposes of those who drafted the amendments: they have deprived the black man of the ballot and at the same time have given every white man the opportunity to vote.

Appeals to the Federal courts against these provisions have been unavailing. Even before the disfranchisement had begun, the Supreme Court declared that the suffrage was not conferred upon any one by the fifteenth amendment, but that its purpose was to prohibit a State or the United States from withholding the ballot on account of race, colour, or previous condition of servitude. In 1903, when the suffrage clauses of the Alabama constitution were attacked, the Court declared that it was beyond its task to remedy an alleged political injury, and that relief must come, not from the judicial but from the political department of the government. This decision did not determine the validity of disfranchisement, but it rendered such measures at least temporarily immune from attack through the courts, and indicated that if relief were sought it must be obtained by Congressional action.

The judicial interpretations of the Federal amendments and the adoption of the new State constitutions have resulted in the complete undoing of the old Reconstruction, and have paved the way for the racial adjustment which we may call the New Reconstruction. The new movement must profit by the errors of the past and not rely upon political remedies. In this respect we already find ground for encouragement. It is a significant fact that in the last presidential election, for the first time since the Civil War, the platforms of none of the great political parties contained any reference to the problem of the negro. This omission is not to be lamented, but rather should it be an occasion for rejoicing that politicians in the North have ceased to find it profitable at regular four-year intervals to bewail the plight of the black man. Let us hope that politicians of the South will soon find it to their interest to follow the example of their brethren in the North and give the poor negro a rest. The foundation of the new work lies in sympathy and coöperation between the races, but so long as the office-seeker uses the

black man as a bogey we may expect only mutual distrust and misunderstanding.

Although the New Reconstruction contemplates a racial readjustment, it does not seek to alter that basic fact in the relations of whites and blacks which we call social segregation. While this segregation may sometimes result in practices that do not square with our theories of democracy, and may even cause the whites at times to appear illogical and inconsistent, it is nevertheless the means by which the race responsible for the nation's past, present and future achievement has maintained its integrity. Racial separation has its basis in the group instinct of "consciousness of kind," and is not to be lightly dismissed as "senseless prejudice" and "unreasoning antipathy."

While under the New Reconstruction all necessary measures to safeguard the integrity of both races should be favoured, efforts should be also made to eliminate those features of the negro's civic status which seem antagonistic to the spirit of a just government. Dr. Booker T. Washington recently said: "Nowhere are there ten millions of black people who have greater opportunities or are making greater progress than the negroes in America." Since nine-tenths of these black people live in the South, the Southern negro must be relatively much better off than his cousins on the Dark Continent. But this has only a remote bearing upon our own problem. The question for our consideration is not whether our coloured people are in better condition than the native Africans, but whether they are properly treated as native Americans. In most particulars this question may be answered affirmatively. In his Southern home the negro has been accorded a large measure of civil rights; he enjoys protection of life, limb, and property; he has in the South, perhaps, a greater degree of industrial freedom than elsewhere in this country; and he can secure at least an elementary education for the asking. Nevertheless there are other phases of the negro's condition which cause even the most optimistic leaders of the coloured race at times to show signs of discouragement. Sensible negroes do not protest against race distinctions, but they do sometimes protest when such distinctions lead to unfair discriminations. Some time ago a coloured man wrote



to a leading Southern newspaper as follows: "Whatever may be the opinion of others concerning the drawing of the colour line in the South, the thoughtful negro has accepted it as a fixed principle, realizing that the race has absolutely nothing to fear or lose by social separation. Social intermingling has always meant social degradation to the less advanced element. \* \* \* The negro does not desire social intermingling. All he wants is a square deal before the law." Is separation compatible with the square deal? It must be part of the programme of the New Reconstruction to make it so.

A number of instances may be cited in which race distinctions have resulted in something less than the square deal. The negro is the victim of unfair discrimination by our common carriers. For his inferior accommodations he pays the same fare as the white man, and this mistreatment is inexcusable. Separate coaches are a necessity, but separation should not be allowed to produce injustice. Separate schools are also a necessity, but there are indications that in the division of the school fund the negro does not get a square deal. In some of our Southern cities he is taxed for the maintenance of parks, libraries, and museums for the exclusive use of the whites, while the members of his own race are not provided with any similar facilities. Our courts, and especially our inferior courts, sometimes show a tendency to mete out to the black man the extreme penalty of the law, while in the white man's case they temper justice with mercy. Again—and this is the most serious of all—the negro is too frequently the victim of mob violence, though, happily, such statistics as we have show that lynching is on the wane. The correction of such untoward conditions should be part of the work of our New Reconstruction.

A new phase of the civic treatment of the negro has recently appeared in the form of segregation by law in municipalities. In both the North and South the urban negro population is usually to be found in a district apart to itself. This is not an unusual phenomenon. In all communities where diverse elements of population are found, there is a noticeable tendency toward their differentiation and segregation. Our American cities have their Italian quarters and their China towns as well

as their coloured districts, and this racial segregation seems to accord with the wishes of those concerned. "All flesh consort-eth according to kind, and a man will cleave unto his like." In most communities, however, the colour line runs nearly parallel with the poverty line, and the conditions in the negro quarters are frequently those of the slums. It is natural, then, that certain more prosperous members of the race should seek to escape from the poorly built, insanitary dwellings and the filthy and neglected streets and alleys and secure homes in a more wholesome environment. But if they chance to move into a white residence district they soon discover that their advent is most unwelcome to their new neighbours. In all parts of the country many and varied expedients have been employed to exclude the coloured population from certain sections of our cities. In the last few years, for example, property owners have organized for this purpose in Kansas City, St. Louis, and North Berkeley, California. During the year 1911 trouble resulting from the purchase by negroes of property in white residential sections was reported in Scranton, Pennsylvania, Kalamazoo, Michigan, Logansport, Indiana, and Seattle, Washington. At the same time a tendency developed on the part of a number of Southern municipalities to enforce the separation of the races into different residence districts by law. This movement had its beginning in Baltimore, in 1910, with the passage of the so-called West segregation ordinance. Judicial obstacles caused this city to enact four segregation ordinances in three years. The example of Baltimore was followed by the cities of Richmond, Norfolk, and Ashland, Virginia, Atlanta, Georgia, Greenville and Anderson, South Carolina, and Greensboro and Winston-Salem, North Carolina. A general segregation statute was enacted by the Virginia legislature in 1912, permitting municipalities so desiring to designate certain sections within their limits for white and other sections for coloured residents. The city of Roanoke took advantage of the act on March 15, 1913.

The constitutionality of these various ordinances has not yet been finally passed upon, though several have been judicially annulled on technical grounds. With this phase of the question we need not concern ourselves. If public sentiment ap-

proves such measures and the courts are convinced that the policy is wise and sound, constitutions will be construed favourably to the ordinances. We are concerned, therefore, not so much with a constitutional problem as with a problem of social justice. Legal segregation has been defended on racial, social, and economic grounds. Only the lowest class of whites, it is claimed, will be found living in the same block with negroes, and it is from such a commingling that miscegenation is most likely to arise. In the second place, racial friction is greatest between negroes and the poorer whites, and the separation of these elements will be conducive to law and order. Again, segregation is held to be desirable for economic reasons: whenever negroes move into a community its real estate values tend to depreciate. The opponents of segregation do not deny that the presence of a negro family in a city block tends to depress property values in that neighborhood, but they urge that the upward progress of the race should not be made "to depend on the price of land." It is claimed also that the segregated negro quarters will be neglected by the municipal authorities, so far as lighting, paving, drainage, sewerage, street cleaning and policing are concerned, and that the negro will be compelled to live in the least desirable parts of the city. This last statement is **true** even in those cities which have not enacted segregation ordinances, and it is difficult to see how legal separation can bring about any considerable deterioration in the present status of the coloured city dweller. It is obvious that segregation has been developing by informal social action during a long period of time, and any discussion of the relative merits of formal or informal action to secure this end must be largely academic. The real question is whether legal segregation results in a square deal for the black man. If experience proves that it does not, it must be part of the programme of the New Reconstruction to correct whatever injustice results from the policy.

A measure involving an entirely different principle is the plan for so-called rural segregation strongly advocated since 1913 by Mr. Clarence Poe, of North Carolina. The author of this plan summarizes it as follows: "Whenever the greater part of the land acreage in any given district that may be laid off is owned by one race, a majority of the voters in such a district shall

have the right to say, if they wish, that in the future no land shall be sold to a person of a different race—provided such action is approved or allowed (as being justified by considerations of peace, protection, and the social life of the community) by a reviewing judge or board of county commissioners.”

An examination of this proposed measure shows that, whatever may have been the intention of its framer, it would in actual practice secure only a partial segregation of the races in rural communities. Negroes owning land at the time the measure went into effect would not be affected, and coloured labourers and tenants might still remain in the districts adopting the plan. The plan, when analyzed, appears to be simply a scheme to enable the voters in any district to put an end to the sale of land to negroes. As very few negroes vote, it would be impossible for them to exclude whites from any community, even though they outnumbered the whites ten to one and owned the greater portion of the land.\*

Eight reasons are advanced by its author for the adoption of the plan: (1) Rural segregation is necessary to give white farmers and their families a satisfying social life; (2) it will insure them greater safety and protection; (3) it will secure better schools, churches, and other agencies of community welfare for both races; (4) it will make possible a greater degree of coöperation in rural communities, as racial divisions have proven a great barrier to coöperative enterprises; (5) it will improve the moral side of race relationships; (6) by checking the crowding out of whites by blacks and providing all-white communities it will attract to the South a larger proportion of immigrants from other sections and countries than this region now receives; (7) segregation will make it possible for young men, who will not at present compete with negro labour, to go into the white districts as tenants, save and become independent landholders; (8) it will protect certain rural districts from absentee landlords, who now sell lands to negroes regardless of the feelings of the white residents.

Everyone familiar with conditions in the rural South will

---

\*See the article by Mr. Gilbert T. Stephenson in the *South Atlantic Quarterly*, April, 1914.

admit the existence of many of the evils here complained of, but it does not follow therefrom that the scheme of segregation offers a remedy. That there is an unmistakable tendency for the black counties to grow blacker is fully attested by the Federal census. This crowding of the whites by the blacks may not be attributed to the greater efficiency of the latter, as it has been clearly shown that the progress of the negroes in the South varies almost inversely with their numerical ratio to the whole population. The negroes are most backward where they greatly outnumber the whites, and they crowd out the whites in these communities just as unskilled labourers with low standards of living tend to crowd out the more highly skilled workmen in industrial centres, and as Mongolian labourers have tended to crowd out Caucasians in our Pacific States. The principles of Gresham's law seem operative in the case of labour as well as in that of money.

To admit these facts, however, is to cut the ground from under the argument for segregation. If the whites suffer from the presence of masses of unskilled, low-standard coloured labour, the obvious remedy is to take measures to increase its skill and raise its standards. Segregation, instead of achieving this result, will work in the opposite direction, as experience fully proves that black districts tend to retrograde. The negroes do best in those communities where they are outnumbered by the whites. If segregation were in effect in any rural community the most thrifty and industrious negroes, desiring to acquire land, would be compelled to move elsewhere, leaving behind them the shiftless and inefficient of their race; and the last state of that community would be worse than the first.

Racial segregation is sought in our cities because it is not deemed desirable that the two races should be constantly touching elbows. In the country, however, abundant elbow room may be obtained without the necessity of residential segregation. Let us remember, too, that four-fifths of our coloured population is rural, and that the proposed concentration of this element, in its present stage of development, in solidly black communities would cause our country districts to be dotted here and there with bits of "darkest Africa" even more than is the case today in some of our Black Belt counties; and the conse-



quences would be unhappy for both races. The scheme of rural segregation is the most mischievous measure that has been proposed since the days of the Old Reconstruction. For years white and black leaders have urged the negro to stay away from the cities, to practice thrift and acquire property; and this plan of rural segregation, if adopted, would make it impossible for many industrious, law abiding members of the race to follow such sane advice. It is inconsistent with any practicable movement for better racial relations, and should be opposed by all who desire the progress of the white and justice for the black.

And now after this attempt to describe the present civic status of the negro in America and to interpret to you the ideals and methods of the New Reconstruction, I wish in conclusion to emphasize one very important fact. Those who would aid in conducting the work should be blest with an infinite amount of patience. We must expect to achieve progress only through evolution; and in spite of the scoffings of many so-called reformers, Herbert Spencer was right when he preached that evolution is most satisfactory in its results when its processes are slow. No better example of the folly of attempting to force the process of social evolution can be given than that which is shown by the history of the Old Reconstruction.

Much of the inspiration for the new work must come from our educational centres. More and more our thoughtful citizens are calling upon the universities which they support with their taxes to aid them in solving their various problems,—problems which are not only educational, but also industrial, social, and moral. More and more our universities are perceiving their duties and opportunities in this respect, and they are beginning to realize their share of the responsibility for the manner in which the greatest of all our problems is treated. Let us hope that this new conception of duty will cause them to strive more than ever before to send forth constructive leaders,—men who will dare be radical when to be radical means to be right; who will have the courage to be conservative when conservatism is demanded by conscience; and who will dare, if need be, to beard the blatant demagogue and challenge the sovereignty of King Mob. It must be men of this type who bring the New Reconstruction to its consummation.



## Some Public Health Aspects of Race Relationships in the South.

BY JAMES BARDIN.

In the South there are some ten millions of Negroes, living side by side, and in the most intimate relationship with the white people. Physically, mentally and morally, the Negroes are different from their companion race. They evolved in a different part of the world, in totally different environmental conditions. They possess a physical organism and a physiological organization suitable to tropical regions. They have behind them no racial experiences with the diseases common to the whites. They possess no traditions based upon ages of evolution in intellect and soul. They seem to have practically no pride of race or of family. Their minds have had only the short space of some two hundred years in which to lose the impress of savagery. From the point of view of racial psychology, they possess practically not a single characteristic powerful enough to restrain them from the vices of our civilization. To-day we find them here among us, living in the midst of a physical environment different from that in which they evolved, in the presence of a civilization which they took no part in forming and which, consequently, has not contributed to the strengthening of their own racial characteristics.

The presence of the negroes in a physical, social and racial environment so different from that in which they were evolved has produced many consequences of racial rather than sociological import, and these consequences affect both blacks and whites, reciprocally. In the first place, as he was not sufficiently prepared in the school of nature to take part in the white man's social systems—as he was racially incapable of adjusting himself to the radical changes incident upon his entrance into the white man's environment—the Negro has to a large extent become the victim of the civilization into which he was thrust by an institution which was unnatural in more senses than one.

And the white man has in turn come to be menaced by the fact that the Negro has been unable to withstand the evil side of Caucasian civilization.

Experience shows us that when an inferior and a superior race come into daily and intimate contact, either of two things happens; the inferior race is either completely engulfed and assimilated by the superior; or a sort of biological conflict is set up between the two races, the end of which is the destruction of one or the other. The second of these alternatives is the condition which has obtained very often in history: I need but to cite the case of the native Hawaiians, and of the Indian tribes in this country who have established close relationships with the whites. In the south today this condition is the one which obtains; we are in the presence of such a biological conflict; and while the altruistic ideals of our civilization and the humanity of the Christian religion serve to mitigate somewhat the relentless law of the survival of the fittest, the conflict is nevertheless a deadly one. We see expressions of it everywhere, among both blacks and whites. But these expressions are more marked in the negro, because, since he is ethnically the inferior race, he is bearing the brunt of the battle. Some of these manifestations are of extreme significance. As an evidence of their impermeability to our civilization, one needs but to recall the ease with which the negro masses will revert to barbaric conditions of life if left to themselves. As evidence of their anti-social tendencies when judged by the standards of our public morals and laws, one has but to contemplate the only too well authenticated facts in respect of the enormous amount of crime committed by a relatively small Negro population. And, finally, as evidence of their lack of adaptability to their physical environment, one has but to observe the amount of disease and degeneracy present in the race.

I propose to confine myself to this last-named factor in the Negro's relationship to us—the factor of his reaction to his physical environment as expressed in the amount of disease and degeneracy present in the race; I shall also endeavor briefly to point out some of the consequences to the white people of this disease and degeneracy among the Negroes.

For the sake of convenience and clearness of presentation, this problem—the Negro's relation to the health of the South—may be divided into two parts, each of which may be considered separately from the other, and each of which has its own peculiar significance. The first of these divisions embraces what may be called the diseases of the Negro which more immediately affect and menace the State. The second division will include those diseases which affect and menace the individuals comprising the state. Each group largely overlaps the other, of course. In the first group I propose to include those diseases which so affect their victims as to make them or their descendants public charges. In the second group, I shall include those diseases which are dangerous to the community and to individuals because of their infectious and contagious nature.

The diseases comprising the first group may be spoken of as "diseases producing racial degeneracy;" that is to say, those diseases which manifest themselves as hereditary diseases, or which, if not actually inherited themselves, produce serious and degenerating weakness in successive generations. The most important of these diseases are, of course, as far as the state is concerned, diseases of the mind, tuberculosis, syphilis, and alcoholism.

As an index of the effect produced by these diseases upon the social organism, we may with most profit consider the economic burden they put upon the tax-payers, and the economic losses they occasion in many ways by incapacitating the individuals suffering from them. Though these economic losses do not by any means express either the burden or the menace of these diseases, some idea of the amount of such losses is easily ascertained and indicates to the student the significance of other factors, just as the steam-gauge shows by its figured dial the pressure of steam in the boiler.

At the present time there are in the South, according to my estimate, some 25,000 negro insane. Upon the basis of the total negro population, this means that there is, roughly, one insane negro to each 400 of population. The rate for the whites in the South is approximately the same. The two races have about the same insanity rate upon a basis of equal population groups.

In respect of feeble-mindedness among the negroes, we can not speak with any certainty at all, as there are no available statistics. But from such evidence as I have been able to accumulate, I am almost certain that feeble-mindedness is present to a large degree among the negroes, and is rapidly on the increase.

Tuberculosis, as we all know, is extremely prevalent; the death rate per thousand from this disease in the negroes is estimated to be at least three or four times as great as among the whites. The disease is, furthermore, apparently on the increase in the cities and towns. Per thousand of population, Surgeon Wertenbaker of the Marine Hospital Service, estimated that Tuberculosis is four times as prevalent among the negroes as among the whites.

As for Syphilis, there is no trustworthy information, as might be expected. But I have arrived at some conclusion as to the amount of this disease among the negroes by the analysis of vital statistics and by the results of some laboratory investigation recently carried out. In the first place, vital statistics show that the number of deaths reported as due to this cause is 400 per cent. higher in the negroes than in the whites; this figure is, of course, very misleading—but it nevertheless has some significance. Of more consequence are the statistics of still-births among negro women—a great number, if not the majority, of which are due to luetic infection. Still births occur about three times as often in negro women per thousand as among white women. This figure throws much light upon the prevalence among the negroes of the disease in question. Still more definite, however, are the results of some laboratory investigations made recently in one of the large hospitals for the negro insane. After having eliminated all negroes known to have the disease, about two hundred patients were chosen at random and their blood was tested for the Wassermann reaction by a competent serologist. Of the negroes thus tested, about thirty per cent. showed infection. We may conclude, therefore, that not only is there a great amount of the disease present in the race, but also that it is much more prevalent than among the whites.

Alcoholism presents a more difficult problem. We can not say precisely that it is on the increase. Perhaps we might ven-

ture the statement that it has reached its limit, and that except for the very highest classes among them, all the negroes are susceptible to and suffering from this disease to greater or less degree. Associated with alcoholism, and of more import and menace, are other drug habits, which of late years have begun to spread among the negroes. Cocaine is the chief of these drugs, and the use of it by negroes is becoming a serious and grave problem. Any one who has even seen a person on a "cocaine spree" will realize the gravity of such a habit if it ever becomes universal, so to speak, among what we call in the South "bad negroes." To just what extent it is being used we have no means of telling; but from the great activity of the post-office officials, and other government agents who are striving to suppress the traffic in the drug, it must be very wide-spread.

The consequence of this great amount of degenerating diseases in the negro race are many. Indeed, there is almost no part of our society upon which they do not have some effect. It would be manifestly impossible for me to enter into anything like a general discussion of the social consequences of such diseases, even if I were able to do so. So I shall have to confine myself to a brief discussion of some of the effects which are most obvious and of most significance, and trust that from the information thus advanced you will be able to form an adequate idea of the serious nature of the general problem.

As I have said before, the best index of the effect of such diseases of degeneracy upon society is to be found in the losses they occasion. Let us for a moment examine some of the economic effects of the Negro's diseases upon the Southern states. During the past ten years, the state of Virginia has expended \$1,404,227 upon the care of the negro insane alone. The state of North Carolina has expended some \$750,000. The state of Mississippi about \$1,600,000. Each Southern state is spending on an average something more than \$110,000 per year upon the care of negro insane alone—and this sum is far inadequate to provide for the number of patients who should be in the hospitals. There are eleven southern states; it is evident, then, that these eleven states have spent over \$12,000,000 in the past ten years in caring for the negro insane. An equal, and un-

doubtedly far greater sum, has been expended by public and private hospitals for the gratuitous treatment of diseases other than insanity.

You may be interested in some statistics in regard to the Hospital of the University of Virginia; these statistics will give you some idea of the sum expended in the hospitals throughout the South. In the year between Feb. 1st, 1912 and Feb. 1st, 1913, there were admitted to this institution 521 negro patients. These negroes remained in the hospital a total of 10,901 days. The cost to the hospital for their maintenance, which includes their food, surgical dressings and drugs, and does not include the cost of operations, the physicians' time, and so forth, is estimated to be about \$1.00 per day. This makes the total cost of maintaining these negro patients \$10,901 per year.

Of these negroes, 152 agreed to pay the hospital for their maintenance. I say *agreed* to pay, for this is as far as about half of them ever go. The regular charge to ward patients in the hospital is \$7.00 per week for those who are able to pay. The average amount per week each of these 152 patients agreed to pay was eighty cents per day—somewhat less than the regular ward charge. Each of the 152 patients spend an average of 21 days in the hospital. If all of them had paid what they agreed to pay—that is, \$5.60 per week—they would have turned into the Hospital \$2,550 approximately. Therefore, if they had all paid—which they did not—the cost of treating the entire 521 patients would have been \$8,260 in excess of the amount paid in by negro patients.

These figures are only approximations, but they indicate the enormous burden Southern charity is bearing in caring for sick negroes. The University Hospital is fairly representative of all general hospitals in the South. If the negro is thus costing the Hospital over eight thousand dollars a year more than he pays in, what is he costing all the hospitals in the South. The total sum, I venture to state, would not be a bagatelle, to be dismissed lightly.

It is totally impossible, of course, even to guess at the money value of the services and time of physicians who have gratuitously treated negro patients. It is equally impossible to esti-



mate the loss to the employers of negroes caused by the great amount of illness among their help. Such figures, if obtainable, would probably reach an astounding sum. To give you some notion of the amount of this loss, I need but to bring forward the fact that, in many localities, it has been ascertained over and over again that negro laborers are absent from their work almost twice as often and twice as long as white laborers working under approximately similar conditions. You can easily draw your own conclusions.

Such figures as these, which are after all but pale shadows of the reality of the economic losses occasioned to the Southern people by disease among the negroes, will nevertheless serve to suggest to you how enormous is the burden we bear. These figures stand for the immediate, the obvious effect, of such disease; they are the sign of the weight on our shoulders. But they also indicate something else; they indicate a source of further burdens. When we contemplate them, we sooner or later will ask ourselves: What of the future?

Naturally, I shall not attempt to answer that question. But I believe I can point out a few things which will at least give a foundation upon which a prediction might be based. Let us go back for a brief review of the Negro's health history since slavery; by viewing his past performances, we may be able to forecast what he will do in the future.

Fifty years ago, according to the best evidence obtainable, physical and mental diseases were rare in the negro race. While it is doubtless necessary to proceed with caution and to take with a large grain of salt the opinions of many who would have us believe that just before the war the negroes were physically perfect, owing to the influence of a rigid selection, a sifting of the evidence will disclose that the black man of those days was vastly better off physically than he is now. And while he was mentally perhaps "a child of nature still," what thoughts he had were healthy, and what knowledge he possessed was not that gained in or filtered from the city slums.

In 1864 there were practically no negro insane; such cases as did exist were due either to congenital accidents, which produced idiots or imbeciles, or were cases of mania and melan-

cholia and the like, due to bodily or unfavorable environmental causes acting on the individual. Physicians of that time are almost unanimous in the opinion that the so-called "degenerative" types of insanity, such as the dementia of the young (*dementia praecox*), paranoia, manic-depressive insanity and the like, were almost unknown. We must allow for errors of diagnosis on the part of these elder physicians. But when we have made every concession demanded by our caution, we are obliged to conclude that these degenerative types of mental disease were excessively rare.

Tuberculosis, which today is almost a synonym of the word "negro," was not regarded fifty years ago as a particular scourge of the race. In the city of Charleston, for instance, in the year 1860 the death rate per thousand from tuberculosis was about the same for whites and negroes. Ten years earlier, in 1850, the negro had a little the better of it, his rate being appreciably lower. Today, in the same city, and in this time of sanitary precautions, the story is vastly different, for the rate in the negroes is about 200% in excess of that in the whites.

In the same way, alcoholism, drug habits, and the grave diseases due to vice were relatively uncommon among the blacks. I might prolong the list indefinitely, but the result would be the same. We may assume, then, that when the negro ceased to be a slave and became a freeman dependent upon his own resources and guided solely by his own caprice, he was, as a people, unusually sound physically and mentally.

What is his condition today? The facts I brought forward in the beginning are the answer. In fifty years—which, I can not state too emphatically, is an exceedingly short time in the history of a race—in fifty years, he has deteriorated mentally and physically until he has become not only worthy of our curiosity as students, but also of our profoundest pity. In the presence of such facts as these, it is certainly permissible to ask: what will the negro do in the coming half-century, if we are to judge by the past fifty years? I have neither the knowledge nor the time to go into the causes of this degeneracy, and attempt to get from them information which will help in making a tentative forecast. But I believe I am perfectly safe in

saying that, for the most part, these causes—certainly the most powerful of them, at least—are operating today with undiminished force and will continue to operate for some time to come. In addition, there is beginning to assert itself one other factor which has only recently appeared in the negroes of this country, and which will serve to increase the probability that he will continue to degenerate as rapidly, if not more rapidly, in the future as in the past. I mean, the factor of heredity.

In the beginning, I referred to the diseases we have so far been considering as “diseases producing racial degeneracy;” I did so because these diseases are the ones most likely to have an effect upon succeeding generations. Anyone suffering with one of these diseases will, if he have children, very likely have defective children, children who will ultimately have to be cared for in some manner by the state. Every physician knows full well the effect of syphilis in the parents upon succeeding generations. Anyone who uses a little discrimination in his observations can see in the negroes of today the hereditary effect of this disease. That tuberculosis is hereditary—in the sense that a tendency to the disease may be transmitted—is rapidly being strengthened by daily observation and study. As far as the negro is concerned, hereditary predisposition is the only thing which will account for his increasing susceptibility to the disease; while he is probably racially susceptible to a greater degree than the white man, several investigators have shown that environment does not play a very important role in causing the disease in the race; if we base our study solely upon this racial susceptibility, we would be compelled to give the factor of environment a large role. But all classes of negroes, no matter where they are nor how they live, suffer from and die from this disease in numbers all out of proportion to what we would expect if we judged solely from racial susceptibility plus environment. Heredity must be playing a large part in causing the increase of this affection among the negroes. In regard to insanity, it is practically certain that heredity is beginning to assert itself powerfully. In recent years, there have been several families of negroes which have become established institutions at the Central State Hospital, in Petersburg; the staff there re-

gards it as unusual when some one of these families is not represented on the hospital books. The same is true of practically every other hospital for negro insane. Last summer, I collected a number of family histories which, though they are imperfect, indicate to my mind that the disease is becoming hereditary and is rapidly spreading as a hereditary disease among the negroes. The hereditary influence of alcohol and cocaine is too well known for me to pause upon it here. In brief, the negroes are being attacked in large and increasing numbers by the diseases I have named, which, on account of their tendency to modify succeeding generations, are extremely likely to cause the deterioration of the race. Each generation of negroes will contain many more defectives than the preceding; Dr. Nolan Stewart, of Mississippi, asserts that the number of negro insane almost doubles every ten years. The burden of the support of these defectives will grow heavier every year. Just how much heavier, and just what the ultimate result will be in terms of dollars or in terms of human life and suffering, we can but speculate.

Such, then, are the aspects of the Negro's relation to public health which are of most importance to the state. Let us now consider for a moment the second part of the problem—the Negro's relation to us as individuals.

Statistics go to prove that the negro is about as susceptible to the ordinary infectious diseases as the white man; he is more susceptible to tuberculosis and other diseases of the respiratory tract; he suffers from typhoid, scarlet fever, diphtheria and so forth to about the same extent as the whites. The only diseases to which he seems relatively immune are malaria and—as has only recently been shown—hook-worm. Everything else being equal, statistics show that there is about the same amount of acute infectious diseases in the two races.

If everybody in the South were white, such a condition would not be particularly worthy of remark. If everyone were white, it would be relatively easy to enforce health laws and sanitary regulations; it would be relatively easy to teach the people the principles of personal hygiene. But everybody is not white. A large part of our population is made up of the members of a

race which, as I have suggested before, is very little amenable to law and instruction. The negro is proverbially a happy-go-lucky sort of creature. It is, furthermore, very hard to induce him to sacrifice his own interests for the benefit of others. And he has seldom shown evidences of any feeling of responsibility toward the community in which he lives.

It is this lack of responsibility, this indifference to the welfare of others, which makes the negro when diseased a positive menace to others. All of us who reside in the South know the negroes and know how they live. We are only too familiar with the rude cabin in the country and the hovel in the town. We are associated with the negroes in all sorts of ways—on the streets, on the street-cars, in our homes. Negroes cook our food, launder our clothing, nurse our children; they come into intimate contact with us everywhere. How many of us appreciate the significance of this when we come to consider questions of public health? The negro, in his home, has no idea of sanitation; in his person, he usually has no idea of personal hygiene. When he is ill, he does not often realize that he is a menace to others; or, if he does happen to know it, he does not often care whether he is or not. He is, as a rule, totally indifferent. And, furthermore, the very nature of his economic position forces him to disregard the precautions which should be adopted by persons suffering with infectious diseases. When a white man gets tuberculosis, he is often able to stop work altogether, or if this is not possible, he at least is likely to command resources enough to enable him to secure medical advice, which will teach him first of all how to reduce the menace of his disease. The tuberculous negro very rarely does either of these; as a rule, he *has* to work, or starve. And he seldom seeks medical advice until his disease is far advanced; he has had, meanwhile, unlimited opportunity to infect others, and probably has done so. The negro woman with sick children *has* to work, or her family will suffer. The usual income earned by negroes makes it practically impossible, granting that they might have the inclination, for them to make their dwellings sanitary, and themselves cleanly and careful.

Ignorance of the nature of the infectious diseases, careless-

ness in regard to the consequences of such infections to themselves and to others, a reluctance or an indifference to medical treatment, and an economic position which forces them all, sick or well, to work as long as they are able, are the factors in the public health aspect of race relationships in the South which most intimately concern us. Any family in the South is likely to have a tuberculous cook, or a cook whose husband has typhoid fever; such a cook is very likely, and in all innocence, to mix tubercle or typhoid bacilli with the salad. The housegirl is very often infected with venereal disease, and the nursemaid may be feeble-minded—which will lead to her giving the baby attention, the character of which I will leave to your imagination. Such a household as this is by no means fanciful. On the contrary, it is evident to all who study the question that such conditions occur to a painfully alarming extent. To give you an idea of how careless and indifferent the negroes are in respect of these infectious diseases, I might tell you of an incident which recently came to my notice. A negro washerwoman, on coming for the clothes at the first of the week, was told by her employer that she had better not do the family wash that week. "Why not?" she asked. "Well," replied the lady of the house, "I thought you wouldn't want to do it, because some of my children have scarlet fever." "Lawd, Miss," exclaimed the washerwoman, "I don't mind dat none. Why, my own chillun has jest got over de scarlet fever demselves; but dat ain't stop me from washin' yo' clothes."

This is typical of a thousand similar incidents throughout the South, and you can readily see the menace in such a situation. Infectious diseases among the negroes are perpetually dangerous to the white people. A well known physician, has aptly expressed the situation when he said: "The Negro is for the South a perpetual reservoir of infectious diseases."

It is true, on the other hand, that by reason of efficient health departments, and a well developed sanitary conscience among the whites, the negro has never yet been able to work any serious and wide-spread ill to the general population. It is not likely that any epidemics originating among the negroes will ever devastate our cities. Of course, if such diseases as bu-



bonic plague or Asiatic cholera ever gained entrance into this country, and got a good start in our black belt, no man can say what would happen. But such things are not likely to happen. We are too well guarded by our health officers for that. But it is true that a great amount of individual illness can be traced to the negro—isolated cases of infection, due to the negro's carelessness and ignorance. This is particularly true of insect-borne diseases, particularly those carried by household insects. As individuals, we are most certainly menaced by the negro.

The worst of it is that we are so endangered largely through our own carelessness and indifference. We are doing almost nothing to protect ourselves. We raise a great hue and cry about small-pox and fail to notice pneumonia. We spend great sums on fighting tuberculosis among the white people, but not enough to stop its source among the negroes. As far as I can ascertain, Virginia and North Carolina are the only southern states in which there is any great effort being made to educate the negro about tuberculosis. Nowhere in the South, except for a few sporadic and unscientific attempts among the negroes themselves, is there any attempt being made to reduce venereal disease. And as for insanity and allied affections, absolutely nothing is being done by way of prevention. Indeed, one is sometimes tempted to think that something is being done by way of increasing it. We white people, upon whom the burden of government rests, are in the end responsible for the great amount of disease among the negroes; and are indirectly responsible, likewise, for the harm such disease is doing us; if we were really to bestir ourselves, we could better matters in a short while.

In the foregoing analysis, I have tried to state some of the more important and obvious facts in regard to the relation of the negro to our public health. With these facts in hand, it will be easy for me to indicate to you a few important considerations which we will—someday—have to face. I shall attempt to draw no conclusions; I shall merely state the problem as it appears to me, and leave it with you for your reflection.

The first consideration is: "What is to be the relation of the

Negro to the health problem viewed from the point of view of the state?" We have seen that the race is showing a marked degeneracy; we have seen how such degeneracy is the seed of its own increase. The cost to the state in caring for these degenerates is already an enormous sum. We should remember, when we think about this sum, that we white people have our own problems to face. Degeneracy is on the increase among us, too; we have our own sick to care for and support. We have, on our own part, an immense burden to bear. Do you not think it timely and pertinent to inquire: Will the white people of the South be able to solve—will they even have resources to attack—their own problems of public health if at the same time they are obliged to support a horde of defective negroes, the production of which they are doing nothing to lessen? Does not this seem a good place to apply an ounce of prevention?

In the second place: "What of the negro's relation to us as individuals?" How many white people have got tuberculosis and typhoid and other infectious diseases from the negroes? How many will acquire such diseases during the next year? We have the negro among us, and will continue to have him; we shall have to associate with him daily. Does it not seem high time to begin teaching him something about infectious diseases?

I leave these two questions to you for your reflection. And in conclusion, I venture to hope that you will not stop with thinking and reflecting—that your consideration of this great problem will issue in practical results. I say this not merely because I believe the white people in the South are being injured by their indifference toward disease among the negro, but also because of sympathy for the negro himself. The amount of suffering among these people is distressing to any right minded person. Do not we white people, who are more or less responsible for the negro's destiny, owe it to him to protect him against himself?

## Thinking White about the Negro in the South.

---

BY JOHN E. WHITE.

---

As a man thinketh, so is he; as a people think, so are they, and so is their civilization. The Southern white people have thought more about the negro than about any other subject of public concern. He is the unavoidable big fact and the obtrusive big issue, from which there is no escape. During the past fifty years, we have thought about the negro, if you will allow me, sometimes red and sometimes blue, alternating from resentment to pessimism. Now, the presence of ten millions in the South is something to think about. That we have been and are influenced in character by our thought about it and our dealing with it, is inevitable. To contribute even in a small way to right thinking and right dealing about the negro in the South is the most useful patriotism open to a Southern man.

By "Thinking White about the Negro," I do not mean primarily to exalt the ideals of altruism as our thought motive. I do not mean to press you for sentimental sympathy. The conception of "thinking white about the negro," I propose is thinking worthily, soundly, constructively and in such a way as to secure the profitable reaction of the white man's thoughts upon the white man's civilization. By "thinking white" I have in view our enlightened self-interest. If it could be that the moral considerations of justice, and sympathy in our thinking about the negro, do not contribute to the welfare and strength of the twenty million white people in the South, let them be discarded for considerations more practical; but if thinking helpfully and dealing hopefully in obedience to great principles is necessary for the development and progress of white men and negroes alike, my thesis is justified on every ground of pragmatism.

It is the conviction of many Southern men that a movement to improve our front toward the race problem is possible, and that the practical way to begin it is to secure the formidable assertion of the best thought of the best men in the South with

the purpose of gaining ascendancy over public opinion. This conviction involves the confession that public opinion in the South on this subject has not been dominated by the best thought of the best men, but has been controlled by incitements, oftentimes promoted by fears and passions. It is a saying of Samuel Butler's that "the history of the world is the record of the weakness, frailty and death of public opinion." In this country, public opinion never dies, but it is very much exposed to weakness and frailty. Public opinion in the South about the negro has been much abandoned to influences of indifference and repression. It has reflected our fears oftener than our force. A better thought and a better courage has existed all the time, but submerged in reticence and restraint. Men of light and leading, bold enough otherwise have on this subject held aloof from their obligation to public opinion. The church and the pulpit have been silent for the most part; the school and the teacher singularly reserved. The editors and the politicians have had the field. If the South has not done very well with its problem, it is probably because our educators, preachers and intelligent business men have not come to the assistance of the editors and politicians. The immediate task therefore confronting any movement to create a current of constructive public opinion on the race problem is to get the best minds together, the best thought into resolution, and the coöperation of the best men in a program that will draw public sentiment to its support. In practically every Southern community there is private conscience and wisdom quite sufficient to determine its public sentiment if it were organized and applied purposely to that end.

In 1896 a demonstration of this fact was made in Atlanta, Ga. A Civic League was organized, which appealed to the best men, white and black, to get together. When it was known that a score of leading citizens were behind the movement, the wall of hesitation crumbled. In a little while three thousand white men had signed up with the League and public opinion was practically solid in favor of law and order and against unfriendly attitudes toward the negro. The significant effect was that the best negroes immediately organized their league. For nearly ten years the influence of the movement has controlled the pub-

lic sentiment of Atlanta. The white people demonstrated their power to improve the relations of the races to the advantage of both. This is a genuine white supremacy, this is what I mean by "thinking white," this is the sort of movement to lead out of the prevailing irresolution in the South toward the problem of the races. The first step of it is to elicit the courageous expression of our best judgments, then to combine these influences and direct them upon public opinion. The best service the South can render the nation will be such a movement reassuring it that the Southern people may be relied on to deal with the problem progressively about which there is more or less doubt at the present time.

It appears to many that conditions in the South were never so favorable for such a movement as now.

(1) Sectional feeling is at its lowest ebb in the South. The presidency of Woodrow Wilson and the return of the South to national leadership is reducing sectionalism to the expiring point. We are back in the "house of our fathers." Our sense of national responsibility is pervasive. The Southern people are on their mettle to prove themselves before the world. To establish the contention that we are able to deal with the negro more successfully than any other section of the country is doing, is an achievement that appeals to the deepest self-respect of the South. This is sectionalism worth while.

(2) We are practically settled down to the conclusion that the negro is a permanency in the South. For several years nothing has been heard of colonization or wholesale segregation. The European war reviving the impulse of immigration from foreign lands is tending to arouse the South's appreciation of the negro rather than diminish it. There is no real desire in the South to exchange him for European importations. In every farmers' club and laborers' organization, when the test is made, a favorable judgment for the negro in the South is registered.

(3) The irritations of race contacts have been generally reduced throughout the South. The prohibition of the liquor traffic has wrought a great result in this direction. The crime of rape and the accusations of rape have greatly diminished. Seventy per cent. of the lynchings last year involved no charge

of outrage upon womanhood. The irritation of the negro's participation in politics has practically disappeared. The disfranchisement laws have greatly contributed to allay the perils of race conflict. It is worth noting that the negroes are in much the same status in the Southern States they would have been had they never been enfranchised. The South may therefore consider it possible to deal with them as the South would have dealt with them had the reconstruction era been left out of our history. There is an important little book in the library of the Supreme Court of Georgia, which indicates that the Confederate Soldiers returning from Appomattox were thinking "white about the negro." This little volume is entitled "Acts of 1865 and 1866—Laws Governing Persons of Color." On page 239 are three sections of laws which illustrate what the white people of Georgia considered as their true attitude toward people in their midst who could not vote nor legislate for themselves. Simple, clear, kind, conceived in moral conscience, these laws provided a definite status and threw wide open the doors of opportunity for the negroes now no longer slaves, and yet not enfranchised, to make progress guaranteed by law. The South is in position to forget the resentments aroused by Reconstruction, for which the negroes were scarcely responsible, since their present civic status is practically what it would have been if the Fifteenth Amendment had not been passed.

(4) Negro education is now turned mainly in the direction approved by the common sense of the South. The higher education of negroes has undergone modification in ideals and in reality. Our public schools more and more direct the negroes' thought toward industrial efficiency. It is indisputable that Hampton and Tuskegee have wrought marked change in the motive and method of negro education and in the popular attitude toward it in the South.

(5) Another factor making way for a high-minded policy on the part of Southern white people in determining their dealing with the negro is the consciousness known as world-consciousness. We are living in the open; the sense of isolation, of detachment, and of retirement below the Mason and Dixon line, has been surrendered. We are consciously responsible to hu-



manity for what we do. Constraint and restraint fall out of the world's eyes looking upon us. We are not independent of it, dare not defy it, and do not desire to do so. This fact is urging in the direction of something with respect to the negro that will stand in the judgment of history. The South is encouraged to proceed in a course approved by mankind. Any other course exposes us to intolerable moral and financial penalties.

I have spoken of "The Best Thought of the Best People" as something to be formulated definitely and launched into the current of Southern opinion. It is incumbent upon me therefore to state what I believe to be the best thought of the best people about the negro and his relation to the South. Something would be gained immediately if every intelligent white man would task himself to put in order the convictions he desires himself and others to abide by on this subject. What I submit is what I believe could become the creed of Southern white men and suggest the basis of understanding and a program of progress with the race problem.

*First:* The Anglo-Saxon people of the South are providentially ordained and charged with supremacy in Southern civilization. Accepting this distinction, we should accept its obligation. The white people do dominate and direct civilization in the South. It is a simple fact. Their numerical superiority is three to one, and the rate of increase is constantly increasing their proportion of numerical advantage. Financially, the white people hold firmly the properties, control the channels of commerce and finance, manage the industries, and dictate the terms of general business. In education, the white people occupy an unchallengeable advantage of privilege and opportunity. Ten dollars to one, is the ratio of money expended in the South for the white man as compared with the negro. Politically, the white people exercise uncompleted power. Surely the conclusion should be considered final against any possible question of the secure position of the white people. The ten million negroes considered as a population are incomparably disadvantaged in comparison. Where then is the room for the white man to doubt himself? The only shadow of question deserving a moment's anxiety is the disposition to base our supremacy upon discrim-

inations of an artificial character. It sets loose the question at once whenever the white people seem willing to assume the attitude of "infant industries," unable to survive without the special favors of legislation for their protection. The only reliable basis for the ascendancy of any man or people in this world is quality. The fear begotten in Reconstruction days is utterly unjustified now. The South is the white man's country. Let him accept responsibility for it and hold it in his merit and deserving and meet competition like a white man without whining. This is noble Anglo-Saxonism. This is the white man "thinking white" about himself and about the negro too.

*Second:* The negro is a man. This thought in its full meaning is required of the South. He is not half a man, half beast, but a man made in the image of God. He is not a negro first and a man afterwards—a may be man, but a man first—a human being first of all. The South can deal with him soundly only on this basis, that he is to be thought of in the terms of humanity. He is an inferior man, a terribly backward man, but a man for all that. Intelligent people of course know that the ancestral tree of the Anglo-Saxon roots in an ancient heathenism. Slavery is not a stigma peculiar to the negro race, nor is Africa the only darkness, out of which men have been drawn to higher levels. It is not the best thought in the South that forgets the fact that the negro is a man. If perforce our civilization must deal with him, it is good that we are dealing with human material. I do not mean that there is any serious dispute of the humanity of the negro among intelligent people, but it would have a wholesome effect upon the unintelligent if the South's creed of the negro should set it down as a fundamental of our understanding of him that he is a man.

*Third:* The negro is a Southern man. Asserting this, we have to acknowledge that the term of description is not familiar to our thought, but reflection demands that it stand. The negro race related to the South is the historical identity of the American negro. It is inextricably bound up with the South. Side by side with what we have done for the negroes, a great deal is to be said about what the negroes have meant to our peculiar Southern life. I do not refer now particularly to the negro's

labor in slavery, which enriched the South before the war, or to his contribution to industrial wealth as a working man since the war. The introduction of the negro into Southern life conditioned from the beginning the tone and shape of the peculiar civilization of the Ante-bellum period. We speak of it as a feudal civilization. We cherish it sentimentally as a rare and beautiful civilization. We preserve its records as a glory for future generations to contemplate. What made that civilization peculiar? It was the negro. Unconsciously enough, he was the patient inner mold, about which the habits and customs and courtesies and chivalries and leisures and hospitalities and tenderesses and lovely women and knightly men were fashioned. There is nothing we like to remember about the Old South that does not include the old negro. Less attractively, to be sure, but not less really, the negro's labor on the farms and in the households of today is the differential of the New South. There are no plans for our future as a people that do not involve the negro.

Edgar Gardner Murphy struck out a convincing phrase when he described the South as "the indivisible inheritance." "We can no more make," he says, "a bi-racial division of our civilization than we can make a bi-racial division of the sunshine, the rain, the returning seasons. It is the fate of the land. If there be freedom of the press, if there be a press fit or unfit to be free; if there be a vital and spiritual religion; if there be books, artists, poets; if there be an historic and responsive language; if there be stable banks, equitable markets, courts accessible and for the most part just; physicians, hospitals—and, by no means least—the kindly interest of the wisest and kindest of a more highly developed population,—these are the negro's. In so far as they are ours, they are his; in so far as they are not his, they tend, in subtle, inexorable fashions not to be our own."

The negro feels himself to be a Southern man. His fibre is knit in a Southern texture. He has proven his loyalty to the South. There was never an hour before the war, when between slavery and leaving the Southland, the negro heart would have hesitated in its choice. Something must explain the his-

toric fidelity of the negroes during the Civil War, when their masters were here in Virginia fighting for victories which determined their estate as slaves or freemen. Their ignorance does not explain it. It was the South smitten into the negro's heart and the Southern white people felt as his people that kept him true and made him trustworthy. He was where his soul told him God wanted him to be. The negro is a Southerner.

*Fourth:* The negro is a black man. To affirm this sounds commonplace, but it is in the creed of the South. This is not to insist upon a badge of inferiority or to shut a door in the negro's face. It is to be insisted on, because it is the pledge of his best opportunity for progress, a necessary guarantee of his protection in opportunity. If the negro is not a black man, and if he does not remain a black man, thinking white about the negro is not worth while. There is no use in talking about the adjustment of race relations based upon an immorality that destroys racial honor.

Gale Hamilton said: "If God made the white man white, the yellow man yellow, and the black man black, He intended for the white man to remain white, and the yellow man to remain yellow, and the black man to remain black."

This statement is not conclusive for argument, but it indicates the basis upon which the negro's opportunity in the South rests. Great nature signifies something final in her definitely marked race varieties. The fact of color is not the force of race. It is but the differentiating symbol of a vital identity. Nature usually penalizes race amalgamations. The data available tends to prove that deterioration inheres in all mongrelism. The apparent mental superiority from the infusion of white blood in the negro is offset by the reduction of physical virility. The true norm of the negro's aspirations is race integrity. It provides an adequate stimulus for his energies, a definite direction for his motive. About the ideal for racial integrity the white people have built their progress. The race pride of the Caucasian has spurred him forward sharply all through his history. The negro can build his home and secure it only in such an enthusiasm. The problem of the mulatto has been the perplexity of the race problem. It has reacted upon the negro race injuriously by fix-

ing a false ideal before the black man's face. The mulatto is also the irritating indictment of the white people. Our whole civilization has had to pay a desperate price for the sins of a few. The mulatto challenges the sincerity of the white man's resolution against social equality. He is the living proof of equality on the level of vice. The mulatto is not, and cannot be, a happy human being in the South. Viewed from his estate under present conditions, his interior life is disconsolate. Every mulatto man is a tragedy. His is the most anguished and most helpless experience being suffered on this earth. For ninety drops, or even a less proportion, of Anglo-Saxon blood feeding a brain more than half an Anglo-Saxon brain throbbing in a spirit charged with Anglo-Saxon pride, to be mixed with a proportion of African blood, brain and spirit, and that scientific fact of a nature at war with itself and condemned to the relations of the negro in the Southern states, leaves no extreme of tragedy unrealized. The elimination of the mulatto is of course dealing with a refractory human difficulty and must be accomplished without inhumanity. By severest punishment of white men guilty of invading the negro race and making him the object of severest social wrath, the South will find a practical point for beginning with itself for the elimination of the mulatto. Then left to the natural law of reversion to type, the two million mulattoes in the South, in the view of many, may enter upon a process of reabsorption and finally disappear. Within his own pure racial lines the negro can find all the necessary aristocracy to aspire to.

When the best thought of the South gets influential expression along the lines suggested, our attitude toward the negro will be morally masterful and make a practical program possible. We will then be able to consider him as only a part of our problem of civilization. We will then be able to turn attention to its other elements as they involve him and he involves them. It is quite possible that the actual facts and forces of Southern life are not clearly understood either in the South or out of it. Let me employ the figure of a ladder for illustration.

Thirty million people in the Southern states are climbing on one great ladder, which we call our Civilization. Ten million of

them are well advanced toward the top. Ten million are at least safely civilized. Ten million constitute the upper white group of intelligence and thrift. They own the property, direct the politics, and determine the progress of the South. Next below them is a group of isolated white people in the mountains who are fallen out of the main current of Southern life. They represent red blood and new brain cells. They are quite rapidly being drawn up into the group above. The solution of their problem is outlet through contact upward. The evil that besets them is contact with the group below them. When a man comes out of the mountains into the larger world, he comes to go up at once or go down in civilization.

The group below the mountaineers is made up of five or more million white people of backward type. They are found as tenants in rural sections, or along railway lines attached mainly to the cotton mill industries. In broad fact they are thriftless or thriftlessly inclined. Ancestrally their record is without inspiration. They do not take advantage of the public schools in any ambitious way. Most of them are content to be tenants and day workers. They occasionally buy land, but do not hold it to pass it on to their children. They are in constant competition with the negro tenantry. A recent census bulletin exhibits twenty-seven counties in South Georgia, in which there are 51,033 farm homes, and 34,000, or nearly seventy per cent. of these homes are occupied by tenants. This is typical of large areas of the South. Attention will discern here the acute point of race antagonism.

The history of the mass of backward white people in the South has not been explored sufficiently for scientific statement, but it is a history and not an accident that such a mass does exist. The early records of settlements in the South show that with the families of colonists came always "indentured servants"—that is white people drawn from the cockney and serving classes in the old country. In the new land they did not intermarry outside their class, but soon became detached from the families with which they had come and began an independent family life, yet dependent in a social sense upon the intelligent and thrifty colonists. In spite of opportunity, these people could



not shake off their heritage of dependence. During the long period of African slavery, these white people had an anomalous position in the South. They were connected with the planters and plantations as renters, but a negligible factor in the feudal system. About every plantation before the war, such families are recalled distinctly by men now living,—a people thriftlessly disposed and without a stake in the land. The negro slave was held as of more value to the Planters than this type of man whose status was economically uncertain. The negroes themselves felt their importance to their masters and their position in the feudal régime to be superior. The war came, the slaves were freed, all lines of distinction between white men were wiped out, and this large element of the white population seemed for many years to have disappeared as a distinct class.

But here is what has happened. With the recovery of Southern agriculture and the increased value of farm lands, a re-integration of the backward white people has followed. The cotton mills came, industrial centers were established, and the magnet to draw these people into communities was provided. This very largely explains the tendency of poor white people to move away from the farms. The land lust was never deep in their nature.

I have interviewed a number of large land owners with reference to this section of our Southern population. The testimony is that the negro tenant is more likely to buy a piece of land and hold to it successfully until paid for, than the white man of this class. Of course there are a great many small farmers of a better type but in the main, the point of antagonism with the negroes is with the landless white people. They support mainly the public spirit against the negroes, which is murderously manifested in lynchings. They have slight qualms of conscience on the subject. Sixteen white men were arrested in connection with the Atlanta riot of 1906. Investigation established that not a one of them owned a foot of land, but came from the mill population about the city.

Here then is an element of our Southern situation to be made distinct. It is a definite task in the South to draw them up the ladder. They define the inflammable fringes of the race problem, and at the same time such tendencies as exist in fact toward mis-

cegenation. Upon this line that marks the contact between ten million negroes and seven million backward white people the South must concentrate its concern. Considering the welfare of the negro race the important necessity is to get the white people just above them on the ladder moving up faster. The progress of the negro race halts at the heels of the white man or crowds upon his heels inevitably.

On the lowest rungs of the ladder is the great mass of now nearly ten million negroes. Are they climbing—can they climb? Do they constitute a greater peril as companions and beneficiaries of our upward movement, or as a drag upon our upward movement? It seems to me that these questions are not difficult to answer. They have been answered over and over by census reports and by what every man may observe. Wherever the negroes of any given community are densest in ignorance, there the greater evils and the greater hopelessness of the race problem is found, and there the statistics of lawlessness and vice are abounding. In her best mood, the South points to the difference between the jungle African of the slave-ship and the Southern negro of today with some degree of moral pride in the astounding contrast. A fair acceptance of this record of improvement justifies a good faith in the negro's availability for further improvement. Bound up with us as he is—intermixed with all our life—related in every way to our industrial progress, and confronting an age which demands efficiency and skill and a higher order of intelligence in labor, surely the South cannot comfortably contemplate the future unless the advancement of the negroes is included in our hopes and in our plans of development.

But does the negro justify such hopes? With one condition guaranteed, most assuredly. That condition is the opportunity of contact with Southern white people who will furnish him noble examples and lend him encouraging leadership. Some things to justify the strong faith and the good works of the Southern people about the negro are demonstrated beyond dispute. The longest distance ever traveled by a race in just three hundred years was from Jungle in Africa to Highway in American civilization. The American negro has made that journey.

Whatever remains unattained and difficult, whatever the remaining gap from the front rank as races stand at the opening of the twentieth century, that fact is unchallengable, that distinction for the negro is secure.

It has been a peculiar pilgrimage, the strangest in the annals of history. It can scarcely be reckoned a pilgrimage as we are used to speak of other great human movements onward and upward. Stage by stage from tribal slavery in Africa, to commercial bondage in the slave-ships, to the feudal serfdom of the South, and then to sudden emancipation, and then to a dazzling day of citizenship in a republic, the negro came, always thrust on by dramatic forces he did not originate and over which he had no control.

One may question if the three hundred years of such swift and unanticipated changes, and so marked by unnatural pressures, does not place the negro's progress outside the category of evolution entirely. Environment is the word that explains what we see, and providence is the only word that indicates the inscrutable forces at work back of it all.

To some sympathetic students the fact that the negro's improvement has come to him so largely without his own initiative has not been regarded as a hopeful feature of his history. This is, however, to be said. Although no driving impulse of discontent or aspiration from within sent him upon his remarkable adventure of progress, yet at each pause of the advance, the negro race has shown an inward capacity for grasping the gain tenaciously. So if the race may not be credited with pioneering power, the capacity of response to opportunity and the passion for holding on to advantage may suggest a compensation for the apparent absence of initiative ability.

There is one truth above all others to be kept clear by Southern Christians—namely, that the presence of ten million negroes in the South is not a problem that merely puts our political institutions to the test. It is profoundly a social and moral problem, and it puts our Christianity to the test. It is the Christian's gospel that is in the crucible. Speaking as a Southern man, I do not dare to risk a Christianity or a faith of Christianity as trustworthy for myself or mine in any issue which doubts the effi-

ciency of Christ for all the difficulties that have discouraged the South in relation to the negro.

The Christian citizen "not only confronts evil and claims that it can be destroyed, and stands before sorrow and claims that it can be transfigured, *he stands amid the misunderstandings of men*, amid the perversions in the purposed order of life, the ugly twists that have been given to fellowships which were ordained to be beautiful and true, *and he proclaims their possible rectification in Christ*." Whether of Samaritan or Jew, Greek or Barbarian, Bond or Free, Black or White.

## Negro Criminality.

---

### INTRODUCTORY.

Each professional man approaches the Negro Question from the viewpoint suggested by the bias of his own technical mind. The doctor sees the real substance of the problem in the health and sanitary conditions of the race; by remedying these conditions he hopes to solve the problem. The educator evaluates the race question in terms of illiteracy statistics, and contends that when the black man is brought completely under the civilizing influence of the school, the really important step has been taken in the establishment of abiding race relationships. The lawyer argues that the criminality of the colored race constitutes the problem; by developing in the negro a real respect for the laws of society we introduce the true element of solution.

It cannot be too early realized in any study of Southern race conditions that the problem is wider and deeper than any one angle of approach suggested by professional interest. The first impression that a conscientious student gathers in his survey of the question is its pervasiveness. And the only solution that can be hoped for must ground itself upon a recognition of this fact. Educators in the fulness of their wisdom will never be able to bring symmetry out of the tangled race relationships until they are given the intelligent coöperation of all the other forces. The lawyer can accomplish much by addressing himself to the reform of criminal conditions among the negroes, but his unsupported activity will not of itself solve the problem. The question must find its solution in the attitude and wisdom of the whole region concerned and not exclusively in the opinions of a few leaders, however large-visioned.

Edgar Gardner Murphy, one of the sanest students that ever brought his understanding and sympathy to bear on the question, made a distinct contribution to the thought on the subject when he declared before a Philadelphia audience in 1900:

"I think that you will see that there is today with us not the negro problem only, under its varied personal and local phases,

but other problems, with it, and I think that you will understand me, therefore, if I say that when a man attempts to discuss the problem at the South, he may begin with the Negro but he really touches with however light a hand the whole bewildering problem of civilization."

In abstracting the various phases of the question, the student exposes himself to the danger of seeing one fact so vividly that he overlooks the other facts necessary to explain it. He is liable to lose the sense of perspective which alone will give value to his work. Very fortunately the study of Negro Criminality is not attended by such dangers in their most acute form. It is a study of negative values, of those points where the negro has failed to square with the dead-level average of organized society. It must take note of all racial and environmental disadvantages as explanatory of failure. Back of the criminal instincts of the negro we see the working of all the economic, religious and social agencies. Negro criminality is the result of many forces. It is a single concrete expression of the racial frailties *plus* the unfavorable conditions under which the backward race is attempting to work out its status with respect to the advanced race.

Excessive criminality cannot be regarded as an infallible test of social deterioration. With the multiplication of laws, with the perfection of methods of detecting violations and with changes in criminal procedure, the ratio of the criminal element to the total population might conceivably increase without any alarming significance. Furthermore, criminality as a standard is purely negative, ignoring the larger positive phase where the law has called forth obedience and respect. It is a test which concerns itself with failures rather than successes.

Yet a study of criminality suggests quite clearly where the negro is breaking down as a law-abiding citizen. By enabling the student to discover in ever so general a manner the sources of crime, it fortifies him with facts that should have some influence in the framing of laws. The study of crime under normal conditions is one of the most difficult of the social sciences, but it is especially difficult in the case of the Afro-American where there is such a complicated admixture of instincts and



motives. However, it is in this field that it should yield its best results once the difficulties have been overcome. The problem is not: why do negroes commit crimes? It is rather: why do negroes contribute a heavier criminality than the white man? It is relative rather than absolute.

The criminal negro is not numerically a large proportion of the race yet he constitutes in the eyes of some men who are privileged to speak with authority the real negro question. He contributes the largest share of the friction that arises between the two races—especially now that partial disfranchisement has removed political friction in the South. He is the vagrant and the shiftless class which too often is regarded as composing the bulk of the race. He is the weak man industrially, the pauper, the economic deadweight. By those rare crimes against white womanhood he enrages the white people into “retributive justice” which degenerates into brutal lawlessness. What he lacks in numerical strength he supplies by the position which he holds in the eyes of the people. To the law-abiding members of his own people he sometimes represents the spirit of race aggressiveness; he dares violate the laws made and enforced by the white man. And not any too rarely he is regarded by them as a romantic figure who through his crimes wages a guerilla warfare against the white man’s society. Sometimes the white man takes the other extreme and shoves all negroes into the same class with the criminal element. The criminal negro has somehow or other fixed himself into the nervous system of the unthinking members of both races.

#### HISTORICAL BACKGROUND.

✓ Negro criminality can justly be regarded as a phase of the negro question which made its appearance only with freedom. In slavery any criminal instincts of the negro were repressed by the strict surveillance maintained under the plantation government. The shiftless, vicious negro was herded into the same class with the honest, industrious slave and forced to apply himself to assigned tasks. The routine of his life seldom offered the opportunity or the temptation for criminal offences. He was so hedged in by restrictions that there was no free play to his activities.

Dr. H. B. Frissell, principal of the Hampton Institute, has described the situation very graphically:

"Slavery had its good features and uses as well as its bad ones. While it kept negroes from being educated, it also kept them from being criminal. The institution of slavery put all negroes on a dead level. The black men with criminal and vicious instincts were forced like all the rest to be industrious. They had no opportunity to commit crimes and if they broke over the bounds they were punished so relentlessly that they were speedily cowed into subjection. In this way, slavery as a matter of course prevented crime to a great extent. When emancipation came, the naturally depraved and criminal class of negroes were let loose and deprived of this restraining influence of the slavery system. Such men began, naturally, to confound license with liberty, and they have instinctively degenerated since slavery days." <sup>1</sup>

Furthermore, the negro slave could become a criminal in the eyes of the law only in the more serious offences. The statutory enactments of the several states "never extended to or included the slave, either to protect or to render him responsible, unless specifically named or included by necessary implication." <sup>2</sup> The ordinary systems of criminal procedure in the several states did not cover offences committed by slaves and each commonwealth was forced to enact a slave code to provide penalties for violations of the law by the negroes. The conditions of servitude took away any deterrent influence that pecuniary fine, imprisonment or banishment might have possessed for the negro. And there were only two forms of punishment that had any value when invoked against the negro offender—whipping and death. "The extremes, death and whipping, being the only available punishments, it becomes necessary, in forming a slave code, to throw all offences under the one or the other." <sup>3</sup>

Only such offences were recognized by the state as were too serious to be dealt with efficiently by the masters. Many crimes were made capital when committed by the negro because there

1. Patterson, *The Negro and His Needs*, 187-188.

2. T. R. R. Cobb, *The Law of Slavery*, 259.

3. *Ibid*, 260.

was no other adequate penalty at hand. For instance, we find manslaughter punishable with death in the case of the negro slave and with life-imprisonment in the case of the white. But as Cobb points out in his scholarly work on "The Law of Slavery," the capital punishment was "seldom inflicted undeservedly." "The slave's situation is such that the temptation to commit the higher offences is very slight and only the most vicious are ever guilty of them. Executions of slaves for any of these offences are very rare."<sup>4</sup>

The slave-owners lived sometimes in dread of servile insurrections—a dread which occasional uprisings like Nat Turner's kept acute. Many laws designed to prevent insurrections were enacted against slave gatherings and these laws were enforced by the rural constabulary rather than by the individual masters. In 1822, a committee of Charleston citizens memorialized the state legislature to enact laws to counteract the discontent prevalent among the slaves. After reviewing the recent abortive insurrections, the petitioners summarized the situation as follows:

"Under the influence of mild and generous feelings, the owners of slaves in our state were rearing up a system which extended many privileges to our negroes; afforded them greater protection; relieved them from numerous restraints; enabled them to assemble without the presence of a white person for the purpose of social intercourse or religious worship; yielding to them the facilities of acquiring most of the comforts and many of the luxuries of improved society; and what is of more importance, affording them means of enlarging their minds and extending their information; a system whose establishment many persons could not reflect upon without concern, and whose rapid extension, the experienced among us could not observe but with 'fear and trembling;' nevertheless, a system which met the approbation of the greater number of our citizens who exulted in what they termed the progress of liberal ideas upon the subject of slavery, whilst many good and pious persons fondly cherished the expectation that our negroes would be influenced in their conduct towards their owners by sentiments of affection and gratitude.

---

4. *Ibid.*, *The Law of Slavery*, 260.

"The tranquility and good order manifested for a time among the slaves induced your memorialists to regard the extension of their privileges in a favorable light, and to entertain the hope that as they were more indulged, they would become more satisfied with their condition and more attached to the whites.

"But in the midst of these promising appearances whilst the citizens were reposing the utmost confidence in the fidelity of the negroes, the latter were plotting the destruction of the former." <sup>5</sup>

Robert Toombs in his famous defence of slavery delivered in Tremont Temple, Boston, January 24, 1855, made a very unfavorable comparison between the criminality of the free negro at the North and the slave negro at the South. "Denied social equality by an irreversible law of nature and political rights by municipal law, incapable of maintaining an unequal struggle with a superior race, the melancholy history of his career of freedom is most usually found recorded in criminal courts, jails, poor-houses and penitentiaries. The authentic statistics of crime and poverty show an amount of crime among the free blacks out of all proportions to their numbers when compared to any class of the white race." Toombs in his parallel paints a roseate picture of the negro slave in the South, declaring that he was working out his social salvation under the most normal conditions.

The scant records upon which any opinion can be based tell the story of a minimum amount of criminality among the slave negroes. Naturally the master was unwilling to release his jurisdiction over his slave and would consent to a transference of authority only in the most aggravated cases. No owner wished to lose even temporarily the services of his slave through imprisonment for some petty violation of the law; he preferred himself to inflict some form of corporal punishment. The records, however, show many cases of executions for rape, murder and arson.

Hoffman has stated the situation in the following summary:

"During slavery the negro committed fewer crimes than the

---

5. Memorial of the Citizens of Charleston to the Senate and House of Representatives of the State of South Carolina. Quoted in Phillips, *Documentary History of American Society*, 103.

white man and only on rare occasions was he guilty of the more atrocious crimes, such as rape and murder of white females. Whether from cowardice or respect and devotion to his master, he respected the persons of his master's household, and few indeed are the recorded attempts at insurrection and revolt on the part of the Southern slave. Criminal statistics of the colored population previous to the emancipation are difficult to obtain, and on account of the abnormal conditions of servitude would have little value for purposes of comparison with the wholly different conditions of freedom."<sup>6</sup>

No more unfortunate period in American history could have been chosen for the justification of emancipation than the few years following the War between the States. Four million slaves were legislated into freedom as an incident to a greater issue. They were thrown clear of all the restraints which had formed such a large part of their life in the past and placed upon an equal basis of individual responsibility with the men who had been their masters. They stood as a buffer between the sentimental enthusiasm of the North and the half-hearted acquiescence of the South. No resort could be had to the dispassionate wisdom of the nation; they could only appeal from the prejudice of one section to the counter prejudice of the other section. The civil society of the South where the negro was to work out his economic salvation lacked many of the elements of stability. Nothing less than the highest order of statesmanship could have brought the negro safely through this period.

The slave had very naturally come to regard physical labor and a stationary life as the badges of his degradation. When he was no longer forced to work and when no restrictions were placed upon his movements, he was tempted to drift into shiftless, vagrant habits. His Northern friends failed to impress upon him the dignity of labor and sometimes discountenanced any desire on his part to work for his former masters. He was alienated from the whites of the South.

This was the strategic time in the development of the Afro-

---

6. Hoffman, *Race Traits and Tendencies of the American Negro*, 217.

American. He had no traditions that came to him from the past. In slavery he had had no legal marriage, no legal family, no legal control over his children. He was adrift upon the sea without a chart; to mix metaphors, he was doled out cake when he needed bread. He possessed freedom to the point of satiety but it was an unregulated freedom. And it is not possible for a race that has known only bondage to change to the status of the freedman without some resulting evil effects. If there had arisen among the negroes at this time a great constructive leader who would have concerned himself not so much with rights as with opportunities, the negro might have passed through this critical period with greater safety. But in his racial ignorance he drifted into habits of pauperism and vagrancy, and pauperism and vagrancy in the disorders of these days meant crime. And it is at this time that the criminal negro emerges as one of the complications of the race question.

#### NEGRO LAW.

In the days of slavery, the negro could become a criminal in the eyes of the law only by the enactment of specific legislation. The presumption was that his conduct was not criminal unless the state in whose jurisdiction he resided had passed laws providing specifically that such action when committed by a negro slave was indictable. Each Southern commonwealth passed so-called slave codes which enumerated the offences for which the negro could be punished and fixed the penalties. Very often the same crime carried different punishments according to whether the author was black or white. If a white man and a negro were accomplices in manslaughter, the white man could be punished with a maximum penalty of life imprisonment while the crime was a capital offence for the negro. On the other hand, petit larceny was not even regarded as a misdemeanor when committed by a negro slave yet it was punishable with a prison sentence if the offender were white.

But with emancipation, the negro was placed on a basis of absolute equality with the white man before the law. Theoretically no discriminations in his favour or to his injury were made when he violated the laws of organized society. The equality



which the Abolitionists had demanded for him was now his, but it was an equality of legal responsibility which worked the freed-man as much injustice as justice.

The attitude assumed by many men in the South toward the negro is based upon the assumption that there are radical differences between the white man and the black man—differences which obtain in every aspect of human life. It is contended that between the two races there intervene centuries of evolution. The white man of America is the product of the highest stage of civilization yet reached; the negro is representative of a barbaric race just struggling up from the darkness of dense ignorance into the light of culture. In the face of such manifest differences, can it be expected that the same law should be enforced with an impartial severity to the two races? Should a body of laws evolved by the white man to govern principally the actions of the white man be invoked against the negro without abating one jot or tittle of its original provisions? Can the same civic responsibility which the Anglo-Saxon has built up through numberless generations be relied upon to guide the negro who is so few generations away from the barbarism of the African jungles? Can it be argued that what is good for the white man is good for the negro? If the negro would only live up to the law of the white man, he would cease to be a problem. But can we expect him to meet the same ideals of law-abiding citizenship which we are justified in expecting from the white man? Are we warranted in excusing actions on his part which we punish in the case of the white man?

✓ Many judges of Southern courts are often lenient toward negro offenders when they are especially severe toward white persons guilty of the same violations. In cases of other crimes, they reverse the discriminations and punish the negro to the full extent of the law while letting the white man off with the minimum penalty. They justify their distinctions in grading punishment with the contention that a violation of the law does not carry the same degree of criminality when committed by the negro and by the white. Local conditions as affected by the enforcement of the laws in question are the determining in-

fluence in many cases. This judge-made law is called "negro law" in the South.

Mr. S. F. Davis of the Mississippi Bar is an article which appeared in a recent issue of *Case and Comment* refers to "Negro Law in Mississippi" in the following descriptive paragraph:

"The 'negro law' of Mississippi is a law of many parts, and is composed partly of the common law, statutory law and the unwritten law, and to be able to tell just which one of these several branches of the law applies in any given case is an art rarely possessed except by a native born attorney. From the letter of our statutes, a stranger might justifiably infer that they applied to all persons within this state, without regard to race, color, or previous condition of servitude, but nothing is farther from the truth. The judges, lawyers, and jurors all know that some of our laws are intended to be enforced against everybody, while others are to be enforced against the white people, and others are to be enforced only against the negroes; and they are enforced accordingly."

In the fundamental rights of property, the negro is fully protected. His privileges of ownership are guaranteed to him by all courts of law and this guarantee is fulfilled with equal justice to all races. The Southern people realize very clearly that the hope of the negro race lies largely in the incentive to the accumulation of property. To destroy or weaken this incentive would be suicidal. Such discriminations would confirm the negro in his nomadic habits and would militate against those stable influences which the white leaders have striven to introduce. The law must assist in the effort to make the negro a propertied class.

Discriminations in the administration of justice ordinarily arise when the penalty inflicted upon the alleged offender is incommensurate with the nature of the crime committed. It is obvious that discriminations may be either positive or negative. The punishment may be too severe or too lenient as judged by the standards which prevail in the community.

✓ Positive discriminations against the negro in the South arise in those cases where the offence committed is of such a nature and involves such a degree of moral turpitude as to aggravate

existing race prejudices. They are most usually crimes of bodily violence which have some racial significance.

✓ Negative discriminations, on the other hand, are found in those cases where the offence indicates a moral lapse of no grave importance racially speaking. It must be confessed that our complex civilization has labelled some actions as criminal which are not criminal in intent. Some Southern courts take the ground that the negro is particularly prone to commit such offences and consequently they are unwilling to punish them according to the full letter of the law.

Bigamy in the South is usually punished with a heavy penitentiary sentence. The very orthodox views which are general among the whites as to the sanctity of marriage has created a public opinion which demands that bigamists be punished severely if they are white. Yet a negro can commit this same offence almost with impunity; he need have little fear that he will ever be indicted. Such a distinction in the eyes of the court is probably due to the prevailing belief that marital fidelity is an impossible ideal for the negro. In the last analysis such a discrimination is unfortunate. One of the evil effects of slavery was to be found in the practically complete absence of any true family life and legal marriage among the negro slaves. Today the negro's lapses from the accepted standard are perhaps most often found in sexual immorality. It is a short-sighted wisdom which discriminates in favour of such immoral tendencies. The law should set its face sternly against such practices on the part of the negro rather than attempt to compromise with them. The negro needs a stiffening of the law in this respect; he should be forced to preserve the sanctity of the marriage tie.

In some sections of the black belt, the carrying of dangerous weapons by the white men is a very common practice and seldom punished according to the provisions of the law. Raymond Patterson, a Northern newspaper man who visited the South in preparing a series of articles for the *Chicago Tribune* was very much impressed with this "pistol-toting" habit, and argued that the negro imitated the white man in this regard. In certain "deductions" which he drew from his observations, he declared: "Sew up every pistol pocket south of Mason and Dixon's line." And then, we are led to believe, the problem would be solved.

Mr. Davis in making reference to the Negro Law in Mississippi with regard to the carrying of concealed weapons writes: "If a negro be guilty of selling whiskey, cocaine or carrying a pistol, he is severely dealt with, that being necessary to protect the lives of both white and black, for there never was a more dangerous combination than a negro, whiskey or cocaine, and a pistol. On the other hand, all able-bodied males above the age of sixteen years who live in the black belt, where the negroes outnumber the whites ten to one, are supposed to have pistols of standard make and size, and are supposed to carry them at all times, either concealed or otherwise, and are supposed to know how to use them to the best advantage on the shortest possible notice, notwithstanding the statute says that if any person who carries concealed, in whole or part, any bowie knife, dirk knife, butcher knife, pistol, etc., shall, on conviction, be fined not less than \$25, etc., but this law applies only to the negro and to the whites who live in the white belt, and has no application to the whites who live in the black belt."

It is confessedly true that in some parts of the Lower South the negro is punished with the maximum penalty if he is detected with a concealed weapon on his person. Such severity is absolutely necessary to protect the negro against his own temptations to kill when the provocation is given him. The unwritten law which condones the offence when committed by the white person also justifies itself on the ground of necessity; in a community where the negroes outnumber their white neighbors by a threateningly large margin, the latter feel that they are at the mercy of the former and consequently must be given every opportunity to protect themselves against any violence. Any discrimination that this unwritten law countenances is not so much against the negro as it is in favor of the white man. It is not a question of the negro's being punished more severely than he does few other objects in this world; it has a strange kind of severity than he deserves. The average negro covets a firearm as he does few other object in this world; it has a strange kind of fascination for him. And sometimes when his anger is suddenly aroused, he will commit murder if his pistol is ready at hand; keep him away from a pistol or dangerous weapon until his passions have cooled and he will soon forget the provocation.

The average negro has not sufficient control over his temper to be trusted with a dangerous weapon on his person and for his own good and for the protection of society he should be severely punished for such offences.

This Negro Law extends almost throughout a long category of criminal offences punishable in the South, lessening the penalties in some instances while increasing them in others. That it is the product of local conditions and local considerations is true; that it sometimes works to the advantage of the negro and sometimes to his disadvantage as a citizen is equally as true. Those who do not understand the causes of its existence would do well to withhold judgment until they have resided in a Southern black-belt district long enough to realize the discouraging conditions with which the Southern judge and jury must reckon. The South is faced with a terrible responsibility when it attempts to administer the same law with equal justice to two radically different races living side by side in large numbers. To one of these races, this law is the expression of its past history and present hopes; to the other race, this law is strange, sometimes incongruous, often foreign to the temper of the people. The ideal is justice but justice does not always mean that all persons guilty of the same crime shall be punished with exactly the same penalty. The law itself recognizes that between individuals there are different degrees of guilt and in realization of this fact gives to the judge certain discretionary powers in the fixing of punishments. And if the Southern judge exercises this same prerogative in furtherance of a racial purpose, friends of the negro should pause a long time before accusing him of prejudiced discrimination. The average trial judge of the Southern courts is honest, far-sighted and typical of the best class of the section; he is usually a sincere friend of the negro race. He would not countenance discriminations in the administration of justice which were counselled by petty racial vanity or prejudice.

#### ATTITUDE OF AVERAGE NEGRO TOWARD CRIME.

The Anglo-Saxon race has been described as being preeminently possessed with the passion for law and order. Lecky in referring to the Romans declared that "a deep reverence was

long one of their chief moral characteristics and in order that it might be inculcated from the earliest years it was a part of the Roman system of education to oblige the children to repeat by rote the call of the decemvirs."

But the American negro has no past that impels him to obey the laws of the states; he has no body of traditions that group around the ideal of the majesty of the law. He had no hand in the making of the laws; they represent the result neither of his moral purpose nor his mental activities. To him government is an agency in whose creation he had no voice and which at best he but faintly understands.

In his native haunts of Africa, law and order were concepts which were foreign to him. The restraints that were placed upon his actions were few, sometimes traditional, but never permanent enough to assume the qualities of an organized government. When he was imported to this country and sold into slavery, he found himself subject to restraints which in their private way almost amounted to absolute despotism. When after several generations of servitude he was emancipated, he found himself faced with the same civic responsibility that confronted the average white citizen. Henceforth, he was to be held accountable for his own actions; he was to be regarded as subject to laws in whose making he had no voice, of whose content he was totally ignorant and whose purposes he did not know. Equality came to him by a sudden revolution but it was an equality that demanded equal accountability to the laws of the white man's government.

"In his past stands no long history of spiritual adventure, of social struggle and civic education,—no memories of a Martel at Tours, of a Luther at Worms, of a Thomas More at London, Magna Charta and the Bill of Rights are the historic symbols of a collective struggle, of a social and political achievement, to which he has not contributed, but within which he has been adopted. The very law which he now invokes has come up out of the suffering and patience of another social group. It is the flowering of the consciousness of another race, is in its genius and expression the white man's law made out of the texture of the white man's experience, and shot through and through with



the instinctive assumption of a psychology to which the negro as a negro is largely alien. This is one reason why he makes no intimate response to it, why it is hard for the negro as a negro to understand it and obey it.”<sup>7</sup>

The average negro in the South if asked to define the purposes of government will answer with the indefinite word, “protection.” To him, “protection” covers a multitude of ideas. It usually means a protection that is devised by the white man to protect the white man. It is not often clear that law as an abstract principle operates to protect the peaceful negro from the vicious negro or from the vicious white no less than to protect the white man from the vicious negro or vicious white. This child-like attitude of the negro toward government is well illustrated in the romantic qualities with which he invests the policeman. To him the policeman personifies his concept of the majesty of the law. If the policeman is kind and considerate, then to the negro the law whose feeble instruments the policeman chances to be is benevolent. The negro never looks beyond the blue-coated “limb of the law” and the prison docks and sees the true substance. Is it strange that the average negro fails to respond to the appeal to obey the law for the law’s sake? Is it anomalous that his response to law-abiding instincts is feeble?

The negro who violates the law most often sees the shame not in the crime itself, not in the public opinion which he has outraged, but in the punishment. And even then the shame which he feels has little power in deterring him from further breaches. The negro who pilfers and who serves his prison sentence forfeits little of the esteem in which he is held by his fellows. If he injures one of his race, if he steals from or assaults or murders another negro, he may lower himself somewhat in the estimation of the mass of his people. But if his crime is directed against a white man, the public opinion of his race is much kinder to him; sometimes, such an offence will raise him in the recognition of his fellows and give him an added prestige because of his courage in attempting to set at naught the white man’s law.

---

7. Murphy, *The Basis of Ascendancy*, 9.

Policemen, sheriffs and detectives declare that it is difficult to catch the negro offender because the negroes in general will not coöperate with the authorities in giving information of his whereabouts or in rendering any assistance in his detection. Often they conceal him and give him food, shelter and comfort, and refuse absolutely to turn him over to the courts no matter how heinous his crime. It is a consideration of this fact that has led many prosecuting attorneys in the South to be particularly severe in trying negro accessories.

If the friend of the Afro-American is truly interested in reducing negro criminality, he must above all other things teach the negro that the law is his law and that he is equally as responsible as his white neighbor for its enforcement. Somehow or other the negro must be impressed with the fact that any violation of the law must be punished and that it is the crime more than the penalty that constitutes the disgrace. Negro clannishness with respect to the harboring of criminals must be destroyed. If we could only convince the average negro that justice is a human rather than a racial consideration, if we could lead him to look to the courts for the final adjudication of rights, the outlook for the reduction of negro criminality would be more hopeful and we could look to the future more optimistically for some solution of this phase of the problem of the South.

#### THE NEGRO AND THE SOUTHERN COURTS.

William Archer, the English author, in his "Through Afro-America" concludes a very illuminating discussion of the relation between the negro and the Southern courts with the bold assertion: "This is one of the few points on which there is little conflict of evidence—the negro, in the main, does not get justice in the courts of the South."<sup>8</sup> No one can question the sincerity of purpose with which Mr. Archer has approached the negro question; he has attempted to make his study as scholarly, and generally as impartial as his hasty trip through the United States would justify. His book is decidedly more valuable than the majority of treatises on the American race problem written

---

8. William Archer, *Through Afro-America*, 97.

by ambitious visitors to this country. But was he warranted by the facts of the case in making such a sweeping accusation against the Southern courts?

If it be true, as Mr. Archer avers, that the negro is denied the full justice of the courts of law, then the negro is made the object of a heinous form of oppression. If the Afro-American is really dealt with unjustly by the Southern courts, if he is oppressed by the institution which should throw every protection about him, the Southern program for the solution of the problem is being nullified by the agency which should be of the greatest assistance.

Many negro leaders have criticized the attitude that the Southern courts have assumed in trying cases in which the accused is of the black race. This criticism has been especially severe when coming from negroes who live in the East and who view conditions from a distance. They contend that when a negro is charged with a crime against a white person and is brought into the court for trial, he is presumed guilty and is not given a fair hearing according to the facts of the case. Furthermore, once he has been convicted, he is punished with undue severity.

Kelly Miller, the negro educator, expresses the more thoughtful opinion of these critics in the following extract taken from an address which he delivered before the thirteenth annual Hampton Conference, July 15, 1909:<sup>9</sup>

"When negroes commit crimes among themselves they are not apt to be punished with undue severity, but when they commit crimes against the white race punishment is sure, swift and severe. On the other hand, when the white man commits an offence against the negro, acquittal is almost sure to follow; and even if convicted he is released with a slight fine and does not go to swell the prison record of his race. Even where the white man commits an offence against his own race he is not apt to receive the full rigor of the law. When two races are living together, the race which assumes superiority is wont to regard itself as sacred in the eyes of the other, and is very reluctant to humiliate any of its members, even by due process of law."

---

9. Southern Workman, September, 1909, 474.

"The Twentieth Century Negro Literature," a symposium of negro thought and purposes, published a few years ago, carried a very interesting discussion of the attitude of Southern courts in punishing negro offenders. The contributors to this volume are prominent negroes and their varying opinions can be regarded as typical of the race.

R. S. Smith, a negro lawyer of Washington, bears the following testimony: "Whether or not the negro charged with crime is justly dealt with in the courts of the South can only be answered relatively, for in some localities fair trials are granted even to negroes charged with the commission of crime. But for the most part it must be admitted that negroes brought into the courts of the South accused of crime against white people are not accorded a fair trial."

I. L. Purcell, a negro lawyer of Florida, is strongly of the opinion that the negro does not secure an evenhanded justice. Another contributor, George T. Robinson, a negro law teacher, also answers with an emphatic negative. The most interesting views are expressed by Thomas Hewins, a lawyer of Virginia:

"Whether the negro be tried for a crime he commits in the North or South, he will get as fair a verdict upon the law and evidence presented in the Southern courts as in the courts of any State in this Union."

In writing of the attitude of the Southern courts toward negro attorneys, Hewins declares that "never in my life has anyone of them (Virginia judges) treated me amiss in their courts, nor can I point to a single case where snap judgment was meted out to a man of color, for the simple reason that he was colored." He concludes his discussion with the following statement: "If a man is of my color and he is wrong, I am against him. If a man is of my color and he is right, I am for him. Let the negro adopt this as a maxim and justice in the courts of the South is his, now and forever."

This charge of racial injustice is not new. It is as old as negro freedom in this country. Many years ago Henry Grady felt himself impelled to defend the South from the charge that her courts of justice were closed to the black man. Speaking in Boston in 1889, two weeks before his death, he denied the

accusation which thundered from the North at that time, claiming that the negro was legally oppressed in his section:

"What is the testimony of the courts? In penal legislation we have steadily reduced felonies to misdemeanors, and have led the world in mitigating punishment for crime, that we might save, as far as possible, this dependent race from its own weakness. In our penitentiary record sixty per cent. of the prosecutors are negroes, and in every court the negro criminal strikes out the colored juror, that white men may judge his case.

"In the North, one negro in every 185 is in jail—in the South, only one in 446. In the North the percentage of negro prisoners is six times as great as that of the native whites; in the South only four times as great. If prejudice wrongs him in the Southern courts, the record above shows it to be deeper in Northern courts. I assert here, and a bar as intelligent and upright as the bar of Massachusetts will solemnly indorse my assertion, that in the Southern courts, from the highest to the lowest, pleading for life, liberty or property, the negro has a distinct advantage because he is a negro apt to be overreached, oppressed—and that this advantage reaches from the juror in making his verdict to the judge in measuring his sentence."

There is a wide contrariety of opinion among the students of the question as to whether the negro gets an equal measure of justice with the white man in the courts of the South. It must be confessed that it is not so much a problem of abstract justice as it is of relative justice, if there be such a conception as relative justice. The negro generally speaking does not receive punishments incommensurate with the grade of the offence; he is rarely convicted on leaky evidence which does not warrant a conviction. The critics of the Southern courts base their arguments on the contention that the white man guilty of the same violation is punished lightly while the negro is too often given the maximum penalty. It is not so much a problem of the negro criminal's being punished too heavily as it is a question of the white criminal's being punished too lightly.

✓ The Southern courts have not been able to adjust themselves completely to the fact that they are forced to try cases in which the defendants come from the two most diverse races in the

world. And many judges in exercising their prerogative of grading punishments are tempted to believe that the same offence may be committed by a negro and a white person and call for different penalties. And in fixing the punishments, they are not always harsh upon the negro; many times they turn the black offender free with the admonition, "not guilty but don't do it again," while sentencing the white man to the maximum penalty. Kelly Miller once admitted that he believed "from observation and examination, that, taking the Southern courts as a whole, the Negro in some cases is treated unusually severely, and in others with unusual lenity."<sup>10</sup>

William H. Sanford, of Montgomery, Alabama, in an address delivered before the Southern Sociological Congress in 1912 declared that the treatment which the negro received at the hands of the Southern courts varies with the different sections. He divided the South into three distinct sections:

"First, where the population is composed largely of Negroes, sometimes in the ratio of as many as ten to one. Second, where the population is largely white, usually at a ratio of about two to one. Third, where the population is almost entirely white.

"In the first of these, in the administration of the criminal law, the Negro usually gets even and exact justice, sometimes tempered with mercy. The average white man who serves on the juries in these counties, in his cooler moments and untouched by racial influences, is a believer in fair play, and for the most part is the descendant of the men who builded the foundation of our states. But in these communities, a white man rarely, if ever, gets a fair and impartial trial, and, if indeed he is indicted by a grand jury, his conviction or acquittal is determined more upon his family connections, his business standing or his local political influence than upon the evidence in the case as applied to the law.

"In the second of these communities the law is more nearly enforced as to both classes, and except in cases where the rights of the one are opposed to those of the other, convictions may be had, and indeed are often had, against the members of both races for offences of the more serious nature.

---

10. Southern Workman. September, 1909, page 473. ✓



"In the third of these communities the white man usually gets a fair trial and is usually acquitted or convicted according to the evidence under the law, while the negro, the member of an opposite race has scant consideration before a jury composed entirely of white men, and is given the severest punishments for the most trivial offences."

There are very few communities in the South where "the population is almost entirely white." And it is to be seriously questioned whether even these few communities deserve the wholesale criticism which Mr. Sanford has offered. The bulk of the Southern communities fall under his first two divisions. It is inadvisable to divide the South into three parts so far as the administration of racial justice be concerned. Such an apportionment presents too great a temptation to rash generalizations, over emphasizes the importance of the numerical ratio between the two races and ignores the personality of the local judges which is of primary importance. At best, such a division can only be used as indicative of tendencies.

An article upon "Negro in Crime" which appeared in the *Independent* for May 18, 1899, clips the following items from an issue of the *Atlanta Constitution*:

"Egbert Jackson (coloured), aged thirteen, was given a sentence of \$50, or ten months on the chain gang, for larceny from the house of ———.

"The most affecting scene of all was the sentencing of Joe Redding, a white man, for the killing of his brother, John Redding \* \* \* Judge ——— is a most tender-hearted man and heard the prayers and saw the tears and tempered justice with moderation, and gave the modern Cain two years in the penitentiary."

This "deadly parallel" seems to argue that such apparent discriminations are common practices of the Southern courts, that the negro boy received the long sentence because he was colored, while the murderer was punished lightly because he was white. A similar comparison of the inequalities of punishments can be paralleled in any state of the Union. It is wrong to attempt to excuse or explain away such instances of injustice. But it is equally as wrong to fasten them upon the South as a peculiar

and distinguishing feature of its judicial system. At the time when this is being written the papers are carrying the account of a young boy in New Jersey who was sentenced to a year in the penitentiary because he killed a rabbit out of the game season: and the rabbit was in his back yard, eating vegetables out of the garden at the time when he killed it. The same issues of the New York papers chronicled very sensationally how a certain doctor had been sentenced to two years for using the mails to defraud investors out of one million dollars.

Alfred Holt Stone, who is probably the best informed and most broad minded student of the Southern Race Problem, testifies very interestingly on the subject of legal injustice in the South:

"In a county in Mississippi in which the Negroes outnumber the whites by 9 to 1, I have seen a Negro tried by a white jury for the killing of a white man, and walk out of the court room free and without molestation and the incident excited no word of comment or surprise. I have seen white men hanged who had been convicted of murder on Negro testimony. Within the same week in my state last year a Negro was acquitted by a white jury of a charge of assaulting a white woman, and a white man was sent to the penitentiary for whitecapping Negroes. There is not a community in the South where such things as these do not constantly occur, but their record is buried in the musty documents of courts, instead of being trumpeted abroad. The white people in these communities accept such incidents as mere matters of course; they are not grouped and paraded in the pages as rare and striking phenomena."<sup>11</sup>

In Asheville, North Carolina, several years ago a negro desperado crazed with cocaine, killed two policemen and wounded another before he went into hiding. Two days later he was found by a posse, offered resistance and was shot to death. During the next few months the police authorities of the city received several anonymous letters from negroes threatening to kill every policeman in the town. Three years later a policeman arrested a negro charged with stealing a cow and was carrying

---

11. Alfred Holt Stone, *Studies in the American Race Problem*, 73.

the offender to the jail when the negro overpowered and killed the officer. The negro escaped to South Carolina but shortly afterwards a negro who seemed to answer the description of the murderer was apprehended and brought to Asheville for trial. The Southern people are especially severe in their condemnation of negroes who assault sheriffs or policemen; they interpret the offence as being the most violent way of expressing absolute hostility to the law and the punishment which they have meted out to such murderers has always been swift and severe. Naturally this murder following close on the double murder of a few years previous tended to inflame the public thinking. When the case was called, certain damning evidence was presented yet it was not sufficiently strong in the eyes of the white jurors to convict the accused and he was acquitted. This incident did not attract any attention as a phase of the ubiquitous negro question; there was nothing strange about the verdict and it was accepted as something coming in the natural course of events.

It is hard for those who have not lived in the Southern States to appreciate the difficulties under which the courts try to administer justice with an even hand between the two races. A judge who believes in the deterrent value of punishment and who realizes the proneness of the negro to crime is sorely tempted at times to fix the maximum penalty. Sometimes the Southern people faced with the apparent hopelessness of the problem and remembering how many of the crimes are committed by negroes lose a little of their patience with their backward race. Justice cannot always be administered without discriminations when one race contributes a disproportionate share of criminality.

It must be remembered that the negro is "the man farthest down" in the South. He represents the lowest stratum of society. His poverty prevents him from hiring a lawyer to defend him in the courts when charged with a crime; even when represented by an attorney, his lack of money precludes him from approaching a first class lawyer. There has grown up in the South a body of lawyers whose inefficiency keeps them from securing a respectable practice and who make a specialty of defending negro offenders. This inadequate legal representation in the court

room naturally does not increase the negro's chances of securing a fair verdict according to the facts of the case. Such lawyers as the average negro is able to employ cannot compete with the prosecuting attorney who represents the commonwealth.

Booker Washington in an open letter addressed to the Southern papers under the date of November 27, 1904, declared: "I have said that such lawless conditions exist in only a 'few counties' and I used the word advisedly. In the great majority of the counties in the South, life and property are just as safe as anywhere in the United States."

It is likely that some Southern judges are unduly harsh in their punishment of negro offenders. But the rule should not be established by the exception. Unfair judges can be found occasionally wherever justice is administered according to fixed rules and by human agencies. The Southern people realize that they will not profit by any injustice that may be dealt out to the negro; rather will such injustice react to complicate the problem with which their lives and their fortunes are so intimately associated. Sometimes in a moment of passion or impatience with the black man, they may countenance unfair treatment of the negro; but their sober second thought teaches them the injustice no less than the danger of such policy.

Judge W. H. Thomas, who has been a trial judge in Montgomery, Alabama, for many years, touched the heart of the problem when he declared in a speech delivered before the Southern Sociological Congress in 1912:

"My observation has been that the courts try the Negro fairly. I have observed that juries have not hesitated to acquit the Negro when the evidence showed his innocence. Yet honesty demands that I say that justice too often miscarries in the attempt to enforce the criminal law against the native white man. It is not that the Negro fails to get justice before the courts in the trial of the specific indictment against him, but too often it is that the native white man escapes it. It must be poor consolation to the foreign-born, the Negro and the ignorant generally to learn that the law has punished only the guilty of their class or race, and to see that the guilty of the class, fortunate by reason of wealth, learning or color, are not so punished for like crime.

There must be a full realization of the fact that if punishments of the law are not imposed on all offenders alike, it will breed distrust of administration."

And the problem reduces itself to this: with the present scheme of judicial administration how can the better class be made amenable to the law and the punishments which the law decrees for its infraction? This problem is not peculiar to the South. It is world-old. Probably it is part of the wages of our sin, part of the penalty which we must pay for neglecting to perfect our system for the administration of an even-handed justice.

#### CONCLUSION.

Some students have begun their study of the Negro Question in the fullest spirit of optimism. They have approached every phase of it with high hopes of discovering some ready-made solution to this problem of American civilization. But all too soon they reach sometimes the point of disillusionment. When they look back over the results of their investigations and take up the task of summarizing their conclusions, their optimism falls from them like some ill-fitting garment. The hard facts of the problem dominate and when they sit down to the peaceful work of committing their thoughts to print, the note of pessimism enters in and they become oppressed by the apparent hopelessness of the whole question.

Truly enough a careful study of the race question will yield much that may daunt the spirits of the most ardent friend of the Afro-American. The tangled features of the problem are eternally presenting themselves to depress and to bewilder the optimistic student. They cannot be escaped for they are imbedded in the very nature of the relationship between the advanced and backward race.

William Garrott Brown writing on "The Lower South in American History," sounds a true note. It may appear as being discouraging but it is a pessimism which is based upon facts and which reaches out after the mental attitude which in time will bring a reasoning optimism:

"We must take up every new plan with the chastening knowledge that most of our devices have failed, that nothing which

can be quickly accomplished will go deeply enough to last; that no sudden illumination will ever come, nor any swift breaking of the clouds shed sunlight on our shadowed land. Africa still mocks America from her jungles. 'Still,' she jeers, 'with the dense darkness of my ignorance, I confound your enlightenment. Still, with my sloth, I weigh down the arms of your industry. Still, with my supineness, I hang upon the wings of your aspiration. And in the very heart of your imperial republic I have planted, sure and deep, the misery of this ancient curse I bear.'" <sup>12</sup>

This temptation to pessimism is especially strong to the student of negro criminality who in the nature of things is dealing with the most revolting features of the question. He sees the depths of depravity to which the Afro-American sometimes sinks. He is concerned with the conditions which after all furnish the most concrete evidence of the failure of the negro to measure up to the demands of an ordered civilization. It is the negro of the docks, of the prison house, of the electric chair whom he studies. He seldom looks beyond these associations to the peaceful, thrifty ways of the better class of negroes.

But even the student of negro criminality sees the light of a better day. As he considers the unfortunate conditions under which the negro began his life as a free citizen, as he traces the increase of criminality from the days of Reconstruction to the high water mark in the nineties, as he studies the gradual decrease which has set in within the last twenty years, he must be optimistic in his outlook. He cannot escape the conviction that with the improvement of conditions which environ the black man the criminal negro as a distinct complication of the negro question will disappear. Of course, no one can conscientiously believe that the negro will ever reach the point where he will be equally as susceptible to the restraints of the law as the white man. Such a millenium will come only when the negro establishes himself as the equal of the white man in basic education and character. The white man has imbedded in his nature the Anglo-Saxon passion for justice and for the majesty of the law; this passion can never be the negro's in an equal measure.

---

12. William Garrott Brown, *The Lower South in American History*, 271.



Attention has already been directed to the fact that the problem of negro criminality is relative. It grows out of the differences in the comparative criminality of the two races. The ideal is to reduce these differences to a minimum. That the negro is becoming more law-abiding, that he is developing a firmer respect for the mandates of organized society is a fact that has been established by statistics and by authoritative investigations.

But the ideal has not been realized and it is safe to assert that it will not be realized in the immediate future. Yet it is gratifying to know that the students of the negro question have awakened to the importance of this particular phase. In the past, serious mistakes have been made. These errors have been errors of omission, rather than commission. The criminal negro as a subject alike of denunciation and unreasoning defense has not been neglected but the criminal negro as the subject of honest study and charitable purposes has been seriously neglected.

The real hope for the establishment of harmonious race relationships in the South is to be found in the temper of the leadership which concerns itself with the problem. This leadership with respect to the criminal negro has not always been wise and sincere. All the parties involved have committed very serious blunders. It is high time that these errors be candidly recognized and that the program of the future represent the best thought and the purest purposes of all who are in any way associated with the moulding of public opinion with regard to negro criminality.

A senator from a Southern commonwealth has used on the floor of the United States Senate and on the lecture platform these expressions: "Yes, we have stuffed ballot-boxes, and will stuff them again; we have cheated niggers in elections, and will cheat them again; we have disfranchised niggers, and will disfranchise all we want to; we have killed and lynched niggers and will kill and lynch others; we have burned niggers at the stake and will burn others; a nigger has no right to live anyhow, unless a white man wants him to live. If you don't like it, you can lump it."

The governor of South Carolina in 1914 in giving his reasons for commuting the sentence of a negro murderer from death to

life imprisonment declared: "This defendant was convicted of killing another negro. I am naturally against electrocuting or hanging one negro for killing another, because if a man had two fine mules running loose in a lot and one went mad and kicked and killed the other he certainly would not take his gun and shoot the other mule, but would take that mule and work it; therefore, I believe that when one negro kills another he should be put in the penitentiary and made to work for the state."

These sentiments do not represent the real opinion of the thoughtful Southern people. Few Southerners agree with the author of "The Storm Signal" in his contention that the negro is "the mudsill of the social and industrial South today." The danger is to be found in a condition of things which would enable men of this ilk to secure the reins of government and to change the laws of the state to conform to these brutal sentiments.

As a counter-blast to these radical opinions which have been trumpeted as the public opinion of the South, there have come out of the North mistaken statements which argue that the negro is being oppressed, that the full justice of the courts of law is denied him and that he is the object of cruel and un-American discriminations. The criminal negro has been invested sometimes with a sentimental interest. The crime which he has committed and the society whose laws he has broken are ignored. His innocence is presumed and the wayward sympathy of a deluded, even if sincere, person are given him. Such a mistaken view is slightly less fatal than the fire-eating utterances of certain southern demagogues. When a negro violates a statute, he would be punished according to the provisions of the law; to tell him that he is a persecuted creature serves no other purpose than to confirm him in his criminal instincts and to offer an incentive to others of his race who may be tempted to commit the same crime.

The negro leaders have not always dealt fairly with the criminal element of their race. Instead of upholding the law in its effort to protect life and property, they have often sided with the criminal and been guilty of inflammatory statements. They have looked at the law as being the "white man's law" rather

than as a protective agency to be invoked impartially in behalf of both races. Ray Stannard Baker in his "Following the Color Line" refers to the clannish instinct which has been developed among the Afro-Americans and which evidences itself "in the way in which the mass of negroes refuse to turn over a criminal of their own color to white justice."

The progress of the negro race in America has suffered from the prejudices which have blurred the vision of those who have assumed leadership. The negroes have been faced with the responsibility of choosing between two schools of leadership within their own race. One school teaches the ideal of industrial training and enjoins the black man to worry less about his rights and more about his opportunities. The other is the school of discontent, of militant unrest. The ablest expounder of this viewpoint is Dr. W. E. B. DuBois who has continually sounded the note of oppression and has called upon the negro to arise and assert his rights. The mass of the race has been divided in its loyalties, some ranging under the standard of Booker Washington while others have embraced the opinions of DuBois. The teachings of the discontented leaders have been unfortunately directed and have tended to inflame racial passions. They have certainly contributed nothing truly serviceable in abating negro criminality. Their contentions are well expressed by DuBois in the following paragraph:

"The dangerously clear logic of the negro's position will more and more loudly assert itself in that day when increasing wealth and more intricate social organization preclude the South from being, as it so largely is, simply an armed camp for intimidating the black folk. Such waste of energy cannot be spared if the South is to catch up with civilization. And as the black third of the land grows in thrift and skill, unless guided in its larger philosophy, must more and more brood over the red past and the creeping, crooked present, until it grasps a gospel of revolt and revenge and throws its new-found energies athwart the current of advance. Even today the masses of the Negroes see all too clearly the anomalies of their position and the moral crookedness of yours. You may marshal strong indictments against them, but their counter cries, lacking though they be in formal

logic, have burning truths within them which you may not wholly ignore. O Southern Gentlemen! If you deplore their presence here, they ask, Who brought us? When you cry, Deliver us from the vision of intermarriage, they answer that legal marriage is infinitely better than systematic concubinage and prostitution. And if in just fury you accuse their vagabonds of violating women, they also in fury quite as just may reply: The rape which your gentlemen have done against helpless black women in defiance of your own laws is written on the foreheads of two millions of mulattoes and written in ineffaceable blood. And finally when you fasten crime upon this race as its peculiar trait, they answer that slavery was the arch-crime and lynching and lawlessness its twin abortion; that color and race are not crime, and yet they it is which in this land receives most unceasing condemnation, North, East, South and West.”<sup>13</sup>

Raymond Patterson in the preface to “The Negro and His Needs” wrote: “The Southern man is too close to the negro and the Northern man too far away. Somewhere between these two widely different points of view must be found the solution of the negro problem.” But why cannot the thoughtful leaders of the North and South and of the negro race pool their enthusiasm and high resolves and unite their strength in the attempt to bring peace and order out of the snarl? They are all striving for the same ends if they would silence the radical and deluded members and present their sane, honest considerations. The South—the silent, thoughtful South—must realize how inseparably her interests are bound up with the welfare of the negro. It is no gain to her that the negro fills her penitentiaries and stocks her court dockets, for crime in its very essence is a loss. She does not profit by ill-considered hatred and unnatural prejudices. The Northern friend of the Afro-American must realize that his sympathy is wrongly placed and his efforts at reform are futile as long as the negro continues to commit crimes to an abnormal degree. All his philanthropy will avail nothing when the negro persists in the habits of law-breaking. The honest, statesmanlike leaders of the negro race must realize that the

---

13. DuBois, *The Souls of Black Folk*, 105-6.

negro can only progress by cultivating a respect for laws and by abiding by the statutes of organized society. To ignore the crime and to center attention on the penalty is to throw about the criminal a sentimental interest which never operates as a deterrent or counteracts the lawless tendencies of the race.

Negro crime will never be reduced to the minimum as long as the leaders stand apart and nurse the prejudices which they have inherited from the past. They can better conditions only when they analyze the causes and approach the question in a dispassionate manner with the determination to achieve results.

If there are laws in the South which work an injustice to the negro race, then abolish these laws. Some courts in the South may be denying the negro offender a fair hearing with all the facts entered. Then strike at this evil in all strength of will and sincerity of resolve. Try the accused according to the best ideals of justice and once convicted punish him according to the prescribed penalties of the law. Let the negro leaders raise up their voices in earnest warning to their race to revere and obey the laws of the several states. Let the negroes discontinue all habits that they may have of harboring or sympathizing with the criminals of their race. Let the Northern friends of the Afro-American unite with the white and negro leaders at the South in carrying out this program.

He is irrevocably committed to optimism who can foresee the coming of the time when the negro will be as law-abiding as his white neighbor. But that excessive criminality is due in a measure to conditions which can be remedied should give hope to those who are truly interested in the progress of the black man. Patience and slow time, sympathy and judgment—these must be trusted to attain the results that will come under the régime of broad-gauged, whole-souled leadership.





14 DAY USE  
RETURN TO DESK FROM WHICH BORROWED

## LOAN DEPT.

This book is due on the last date stamped below, or  
on the date to which renewed.

Renewed books are subject to immediate recall.

	DEC 3 1967 45
24 Jan 65 556	RECEIVED
REC'D LD	JAN 6 '68 -4 PM
JAN 1 1'65-8 AM	REC. CIR. AUG 9 '75
22 Oct 65 OT	
REC'D LD	
OCT 14 '65-9 PM	
JUL 9 - 1966 77	
JUN 27 '66 41 RCD	
RECEIVED	
FEB 18 1967 74	
FEB 19 '67-1 PM	
LOAN DEPT.	

LD 21A-60m4764  
(E4555s10)476B

OCT 9

1975 3 9

General Library  
University of California  
Berkeley

347924

E185

.6

L4

UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA LIBRARY

